

STARS AND STRIPES[®]



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sings about his
personal battles**

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taught NFL hopeful
war is no game**

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Volume 2, No.324 © SS 2005 MIDEAST EDITION

THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2005

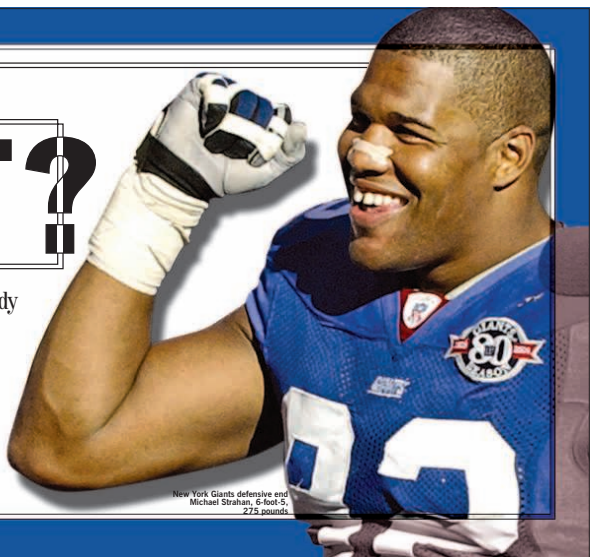
Judge on Iraq's war crime tribunal slain

Kurd was part of legal team that will try Saddam Page 3

Fit or FAT?

The NFL calls bogus a study that suggests 56 percent of its players are obese. But one former defensive tackle said players are encouraged to get "as big as houses" to intimidate opponents.

Back page



New York Giants defensive end Michael Strahan, 6-foot-5, 275 pounds

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Glare of L.A.'s Disney Hall: Parts of the mirror-like walls of the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles will undergo a \$90,000 facelift to give them a little less luster.

County supervisors approved a plan Tuesday to dull a convex section of the concert hall's polished silver siding that reflects sunlight. The glare produces extra heat that overwhelms the air conditioning of residents at the nearby Promenade Towers.

Bush assassination plot: A man accused of plotting to assassinate President Bush admitted many times that he joined al-Qaida and pondered hijackings similar to the Sept. 11 attacks, an FBI agent testified.

Agent Barry Cole's testimony Tuesday came at a pretrial hearing in Alexandria, Va., for Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, 23. A federal magistrate said Abu Ali posed a "grave danger" and ordered that he remain jailed pending trial.

Professor under fire: A University of Colorado professor defended his essay that compared some people who died in the World Trade Center attack to Nazi war criminals, saying he was writing in an attempt to understand the terrorists' motivation.

Ward Churchill said he wrote the essay the afternoon of Sept. 11, 2001, after television networks "spun" the attacks that morning as senseless and after government officials labeled the attackers as evil freedom-busters.

Nowhere in his essay did he advocate the attacks or say they were justified, Churchill told a crowd of about 300 people Tuesday at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

Churchill

Lackawanna Six trial: Over repeated objections from the defense, a 28-year-old convict described his life as an al-Qaida recruit as prosecutors presented the most extensive evidence to date linking a Yemeni sheik to the international terrorist group.

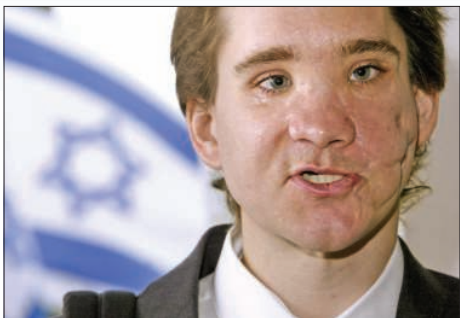
Yahya Goba, a member of the Lackawanna Six terrorist cell, took the stand Tuesday in New York after the judge in the case allowed jurors to see an al-Qaida training camp entry form listing Shuk Mohammed Ali Hassan al-Moayad as the sponsor of a trainee, a Yemeni fighter known as Abu Jihad.

Al-Moayad, a prominent Yemeni politician and Islamic cleric, is on trial in federal court in Brooklyn on charges of supporting al-Qaida and the Palestinian militant group Hamas.

Movie bootlegger dies in jail: A man awaiting sentencing for illegally copying and distributing movies being screened for Oscar picks was found dead in his jail cell, authorities said.

Russell Sprague, 52, of Illinois, may have died of a heart attack, the U.S. Marshals Service said. His body was discovered Monday morning and an autopsy was scheduled for Tuesday.

Sprague was scheduled to be sentenced March 21 after pleading guilty last year to one count of copyright infringement. He had faced up to three years in prison.



Activist injured in Israel: American activist Brian Avery, from Chapel Hill, N.C., speaks to reporters Monday prior to a hearing in his case at Israel's Supreme Court in Jerusalem. The court instructed the military to take testimony in his case. Avery said he and a colleague were standing still, wearing bright red medic vests with their hands over their heads, when soldiers in approaching military vehicles opened fire with no warning shots. Avery, 26, has asked the court to order a criminal investigation and put the soldiers on trial.

World

Beef sanctions: Japan hopes the United States will not impose economic sanctions over Tokyo's 15-month ban on American beef and will continue negotiations, the government's top spokesman said Wednesday.

Some members of the U.S. Congress have warned of possible sanctions if Japan does not lift the ban soon.

The ban was imposed in December 2003 after the United States discovered its first case of fatal brain-wasting mad cow disease, formally known as bovine spongiform encephalopathy.

Nepal government: Nepal's pro-monarchy government on Wednesday banned any independent reporting on the country's communist insurgency, saying journalists must get all of their information on security issues from the army or police.

The government said in a statement Wednesday that it will not tolerate any published or broadcast reports that could encourage the rebels or promote terrorism or other destructive activities, and anyone issuing such reports faces punishment.

Pope's health: Even if he couldn't speak, Pope John Paul II would bring a powerful spiritual presence to Germany if he makes his only scheduled foreign trip of the year, for a World Youth Day gathering this summer. Cardinal Joachim Meisner of Cologne said Wednesday.

John Paul skipped his popular weekly audience with the faithful Wednesday while concentrating on regaining his ability to speak and continuing to work on church matters from his hospital suite in Rome.

Nuclear talks with North Korea: China's deputy foreign minister met with officials in South Korea on Wednesday as the two nations stepped up efforts to get North Korea back to the table for nuclear disarmament talks.

Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Wu

Dawei, who arrived in Seoul on Wednesday, met Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon.

Burundi constitution: Burundians voted overwhelmingly to adopt a new power-sharing constitution, guaranteeing majority rule and minority rights in this Central Africa country torn by 11 years of ethnic violence, officials said Tuesday.

Paul Ngarabane, the head of the electoral commission, said 90 percent of registered voters turned out Monday and more than 91 percent of them approved the new constitution, which reserves 60 percent of seats in government and parliament for Hutus and 40 percent for Tutsis.

Peacekeeping in East Timor: The United States said Monday it opposes Secretary-General Kofi Annan's recommendation for a one-year extension of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in East Timor, saying there is no longer a threat to peace between the tiny country and its powerful neighbor Indonesia.

The people of East Timor voted for independence from Indonesia in 1999, unleashing a wave of killing, looting and burning by the Indonesian military and its proxy militias that displaced 300,000 people.

For 2½ years, the United Nations administered the territory, then handed it to the Timorese in May 2002. A U.N. mission has remained.

Business

Ebberts trial: The defense rested its case Wednesday at the New York trial of former WorldCom chief Bernard Ebberts after two days in which Ebberts took the witness stand and denied any role in the \$11 billion accounting fraud.

Defense lawyers called four witnesses over five days of testimony, none more important than the 63-year-old ex-CEO, who testified he only learned about the massive fraud after he resigned from WorldCom in April 2002.

Stories and photos from the Associated Press

Correction

A story in Wednesday's editions about two members of the Combat Equipment Battalion-Hythe from RAF Hythe, England, deployed to Afghanistan gave the wrong rank for Chief Warrant Officer 3 Cassandra Young.

**Horoscopes, advice and comics
every day in Stars and Stripes**

Saddam tribunal judge, lawyer fatally shot

2 car bombs kill at least 12 Iraqi troops

By TODD PITMAN
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Gunmen killed a judge and lawyer working for the tribunal that will try Saddam Hussein and members of his former regime, a day after the secret court referred five of the ousted dictator's aides to trial for alleged crimes against humanity, officials and a relative of the slain men said Wednesday.

While a tribunal official indicated the shootings may have been due to a personal dispute, one of the judge's surviving sons disagreed. He said the two were assassinated either because they worked for the court, or because they were minority Kurds.

News of the deaths came as two car bombs exploded in the capital, killing 12 Iraqi soldiers and wounding dozens of others, an Interior Ministry official said. The first blast targeted an Iraqi army base in central Baghdad, killing eight troops and wounding at least 25. A second car bomb an hour later at an army checkpoint in south Baghdad killed four soldiers.

National Security Adviser Mouwafak al-Rubaie vowed the government would hunt down those responsible. Another blast Monday in Hillah, south of Baghdad, killed 125 people — the deadliest single car bombing since Saddam was toppled in 2003.

"The bombings in Hillah and again in Baghdad this morning are not going to derail the political process that Iraq is embarked upon," National Security Adviser Mouwafak al-Rubaie said in a statement Wednesday. "The Iraqi government will go after and hunt down each and every one of these terrorists whether in Iraq or elsewhere."

Meanwhile, the insurgent Ansar al-Sunnah Army purportedly posted an Internet statement Wednesday claiming to have killed two Turkish drivers they snatched Feb. 25 for allegedly transferring cement supplies to the "Crusaders" on the road to the northern city of Kirkuk. It was not possible to verify the statement's authenticity.

The two slain men in Baghdad were judge Barwez Mohammed Mahmoud al-Merwani and his son, lawyer Arayez Barwez al-Merwani, according to one of the judge's sons, Kikawz Barwez Mohammed al-Merwani. He said gunmen in a speeding car raked the pair with gunfire as they were trying to get into a vehicle outside their home. The shootings in northern Baghdad's Azamiyah district on Tuesday marked the first time any legal staff working for the Iraqi Special Tribunal have been killed.

A day before the killings, the tribunal



Above: Two boys catch the spray as a man hoses down a burning car in Ramadi, an insurgent stronghold 70 miles west of Baghdad, on Wednesday. Clashes erupted between U.S. forces and gunmen after insurgents detonated a roadside bomb as a U.S. convoy passed. The explosion missed the convoy, but damaged two civilian cars.

Right: Ali Muntather is carried by his father, Muntather Ahmed Ali, after being treated following a car crash caused by a bomb explosion outside the Iraqi army base in central Baghdad.

AP photos



had issued referrals for five former regime members — including one of Saddam's half brothers — for crimes against humanity. Referrals are similar to indictments, and are the final step before trials can start.

In Ramadi, 70 miles west of Baghdad, clashes erupted between U.S. forces and gunmen after insurgents detonated roadside bomb as a U.S. convoy passed. The explosion missed the convoy, but damaged two civilian cars that were in flames.

U.S. forces "detained one suspected terrorist, killed two and injured another during operations in northern Iraq" on Wednesday, the military said in a statement from Mosul.

The first car bomb exploded outside an Iraqi army base in central Baghdad that occupies the former Muthanna airport, which has been targeted by insurgents several times over the last year.

An Interior Ministry security official, Ayad Hadi al-Malki, said six people were killed and 25 people were wounded in the blast, 15 of them civilians. A senior Interior Ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said at least eight people died in the blast.

In a statement posted on the Internet, al-Qaida in Iraq purportedly claimed responsibility for the Muthanna airport attack, saying it was a "martyrdom" operation. The authenticity of the statement could not be verified.

About an hour later, another car bomb exploded in southern Baghdad's Doura neighborhood, killing four Iraqi soldiers at an army checkpoint and wounding three others, police said on condition of anonymity.

Associated reporters Sameer N. Yacoub, Patrick Quinn, and Rawya Raghin in Baghdad contributed to this report.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Tuesday, March 1, 2005, at least 1,499 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,139 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defense Department.

The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is nine higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. Tuesday.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,361 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 1,030 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ A U.S. soldier died Tuesday from injuries sustained in a vehicle accident near Baiji, Iraq.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Army 2nd Lt. Richard B. Gienau, 29, Lougrevue, Iowa, died Sunday in Ramadi, Iraq, from injuries sustained when an explosive hit his vehicle; assigned to the National Guard's 224th Engineer Battalion, Burlington, Iowa.

■ Army Pfc. Min S. Choi, 21, River Vale, N.J., died Saturday in Abertaria, Iraq, when an explosive detonated near his patrol; assigned to the 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga.

■ Army Pfc. Landon S. Giles, 19, Indiana, Pa., died Saturday in Abertaria, Iraq, when an explosive detonated near his patrol; assigned to the 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga.

■ Army Pfc. Chassan S. Henry, 20, West Palm Beach, Fla., died Friday in Ramadi, Iraq, from injuries sustained in an explosion; assigned to the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Hovey, Korea.

■ Army Staff Sgt. Alexander B. Crackel, 31, Wilested Bedford, United Kingdom; died Thursday in Iraq's Anbar province from small arms fire; assigned to the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, Camp Hovey, Korea.

■ Army Spc. Michael S. Deem, 35, Rockledge, Fla., died Thursday in Baghdad, Iraq, from non-combat related injuries assigned to the Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga.

Italian soldiers begin arriving in Afghanistan

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Italian soldiers have begun arriving in western Afghanistan under plans for NATO troops to gradually relieve U.S. forces across the country, an alliance commander said Wednesday.

Italy is taking over a base in the main western city of Herat from the United States, Spain and Lithuania are to set up new bases in adjoining Badkhis and Ghor provinces, while an existing U.S. outpost in Farah also will come under NATO control.

NATO troops will take over from U.S. forces

An advance party of Italian soldiers has "already started coming in," said Lt. Gen. Ethem Erdagi, the Turkish commander of the International Security Assistance Force which has supported Afghanistan's feeble government since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

NATO officials said several dozen Italians were in Herat, and Erdagi said the takeover of the region should be complete

by June.

The international force, currently under NATO command, expanded across northern Afghanistan from the capital, Kabul, the first stage in a plan to supplant the U.S.-dominated combat force across the country.

NATO planners are working on how they might take over the south of the country, where militants continue to attack Afghan

and U.S. troops, and eventually the east, too. But it remains unclear whether NATO troops will maintain the aggressive operations of American forces.

The expansion into the west will bring hundreds of extra troops into the currently 9,000-strong force.

Erdagi said at a news conference that he was "very optimistic" about the security situation in Afghanistan, but said more reinforcements would come in ahead of the election, which is expected to be held during the summer or autumn.

Abizaid: Iraqi insurgency's strength waning

By ANN SCOTT TYSON
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Gen. John Abizaid, commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East, said Tuesday that the strength of the Iraqi insurgency is waning as a result of momentum from elections, and he predicted Iraqi security forces would be leading the fight against insurgents in most of Iraq by the end of 2005.

While acknowledging that Iraq's Sunni Arab insurgency gained intensity from November through January compared with the previous year, Abizaid told a Senate panel that the insurgents' failure to disrupt Jan. 30 elections marked a turning point and indicated declining popular support.

Insurgents fielded only "around 3,500" fighters on election day, he said, citing U.S. intelligence estimates. Earlier U.S. intelligence had put the number of core Iraqi and foreign fighters at as many as 20,000.

"Why didn't they put more people in the field? Where were they?" Abizaid asked in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"They threw their whole force at us, and yet they were unable to disturb the elections. I think that the voting in Iraq, the political process that's going on... have driven those numbers [of insurgents] down."

Abizaid's remarks came in a relatively upbeat assessment of the war in Iraq and political progress elsewhere in the Middle East and Central Asia, where he oversees American forces as head of U.S. Central Command. His comments were somewhat unusual because other senior U.S. defense and military officials have been reluctant in recent weeks to quantify the Iraqi insurgency, despite questioning from Congress.



Gen. John Abizaid, commander of the U.S. Central Command, appears before the Senate Armed Services Committee for testimony regarding a defense authorization budget request for military strategy and operational requirements Tuesday on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Still, Abizaid warned that the insurgency tends to ebb and flow from region to region depending on political events and military offensives — and he said more violence is inevitable. Moreover, he said foreign fighters flowing across the border into Iraq from Syria remain a threat that the Syrian government has not done enough to stop, despite its handover to Iraqi officials in recent days of Saddam Hussein's half-brother. While "there appears to be some change of attitude" by Damascus, he said, Syria remains "very unhelpful" in curbing the infiltration of fighters.

About 90 battalions of Iraqi security forces are lightly armed and have limited mobility around the country com-

pared with U.S. troops, he said, but their chief weakness is a fledgling chain of command. To bolster Iraqi capabilities and leadership, the U.S. military plans to increase the number of advisers embedded with Iraqi forces, although the size of the increase is pending. A decision must be made by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Abizaid said. "We're trying to figure out how much augmentation will be required," he said.

Asked by lawmakers about irregular Iraqi militia springing up around the country, Abizaid said the help of U.S. militia in providing security for the elections was "in some ways a good thing." In the long run, however, they should be incorporated with Iraqi government forces. "Ultimately... it's destabilizing," he said.

General: Pentagon not doing enough to halt IED deaths

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is not trying hard enough to defeat the makeshift roadside bombs that are the leading killer of U.S. troops in Iraq, the commander of American forces in the Middle East said.

Pentagon statistics show that over the past two months, the homemade, easy-to-hide weapons have accounted for a significantly higher share of U.S. battle deaths. In the final 10 days of February, for example, roadside bombs caused at least 15 of the 22 battle deaths.

In the first two months of this year, roadside bombs accounted for 56 percent of all battle deaths. In the final four months of 2004 they accounted for 19 percent, according to Pentagon figures.

Army Gen. John Abizaid, the commander of U.S. Central Command, told the Senate Armed Services Committee he was satisfied that the right people, with sufficient funds, were working on the problem.

"But I'm not satisfied that we have come up with the solutions that we could if we really rolled up our sleeves and looked at it the way it needs to be looked at," Abizaid said. That statement was the most direct public challenge to the Pentagon's approach to this deadly problem.

The problem of roadside bombs, which the U.S. military calls improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, has bedeviled the Pentagon since they began appearing in the summer of 2003.

Marine Corps Gen. Peter Pace, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Senate Budget Committee on Tuesday that all U.S. military vehicles in Iraq will be outfitted with the best armor by summer. Until then some will rely on the less effective add-on armor, which some soldiers have dubbed "hillbilly armor" because it is an improvised solution.

'You just feel like you're helping soldiers'

Factory known for making salad bars now constructs armor bound for Iraq

By AMIT R. PALEY
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — For a half-century, the clangorous machines at American Metal Fabricators have churned out stainless-steel salad bars and rotisserie-chicken display cases for grocery stores and university cafeterias.

Last year, however, the family-owned factory near the Chesapeake Bay took on a new mission: vehicle armor for the U.S. military.

To meet the demand for equipment in Iraq, the Pentagon increasingly has turned to what it calls "nontraditional" vendors with little or no defense experience. The military said it does not keep figures, but Paul Kern, who retired last month as commanding general of Army Materiel Command, estimated it has used thousands of such firms in the past two years.

"I guess everybody who does war work has got more than they can handle," said James Phillip Poole, president of American Metal Fabricators in Prince Frederick, Md., about 40 miles southeast of here. The stakes were particularly high for his 100 employees when they added armor to their regular line of food service equipment in February 2004. Not only did they face a sharply increased workload, they did so knowing that every piece of metal they sliced and welded could make a life-or-death difference. Reports of undersupplied soldiers scrounging for scrap metal to cover their vehicles added to the gravity of the task.

"These people are depending on this to be strong and dependable. I've got to make sure it is," said John Credeur, 20, before focusing his blowlow on the pieces of iron he was welding together into windshield frames.

"It makes me feel like I'm part of something. To see that my hard work is helping our troops, it makes me feel good."

"These people are depending on this to be strong and dependable. I've got to make sure it is."

John Credeur

welder, American Metal Fabricators

The company, founded by Poole's father in 1946 in his basement, had \$10 million in sales last year. It made salad bars and other food equipment.

That was before a military supplier asked Poole whether he could also produce 2,000 sets of steel armor plates to frame 170-pound bulletproof windshields for the Army's Humvees. Workers were excited, though a bit perplexed.

"We were astonished that we got it," foreman Tony Hardesty, 38, said. "We've never done black ironwork before. We were like, man, we're doing Hummers!"

First, they had to figure out how to design the armor. The Army sent no blueprints, just the bulging front of a Humvee (for reference) and a formidable technical specification. The armor, for example, had to be strong enough to hold the windshield onto the Humvee frame even if the vehicle hit an eight-inch curb at 80 mph. "We were going coming pretty fresh," said Glen Kott, who spent three 11-hour days on a computer design program to find a way for the company's machines to bend and punch sheets of metal into windshield frames.

Military tests revealed a problem with the initial design: Rounds from an M-14 could pierce the two quarter-inch-thick plates of armor between panes of the windshield. So Poole added a third sheet.

The military contract created an overwhelming amount of work, coming during an already busy spring. The Pentagon often allowed only six weeks to fill complicated orders, causing some workers to put in 12-hour shifts and work weekends.

"We were busy as hell," said Poole, who sometimes woke at 2 a.m. to get the work done.

As they finished the first order, new requests poured in. The firm has produced more than 8,000 sets of armored windshield frames.

It's been easy to get employees to meet the production targets, Poole said.

"You just feel like you're helping soldiers," Hardesty said.



THE WASHINGTON POST/ALAMY

John Credeur works with a tungsten inert gas welder to join pieces of a windshield retaining armor, for vehicles in Iraq, at the American Metal Fabricators factory in Maryland.

Video raises hope for kidnapped reporter

The Associated Press

PARIS — The release of a video cassette of a French reporter missing in Iraq is a sign that she may be alive and raises hope for her eventual release, France's government said Wednesday.

The tape is "a new sign of life," Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin told parliament.

But Raffarin also cautioned that the video does not absolve responsibility for Florence Aubenas' disappearance and "no dia-

Frenchwoman disappeared in Iraq on Jan. 5

logue has been stabilized" with her captors.

The tape, left Tuesday at the offices of an international news agency in Baghdad, was the first public sign that Aubenas was alive after she and her interpreter, Hussein Hanoun al-Saadi, disappeared Jan. 5.

In the tape, Aubenas asked for support from Didier Julia, a lawmaker from French President

Jacques Chirac's governing party who carried out a failed effort to free two French reporters taken hostage in Iraq last year. The two men, Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, were released in December after four months of captivity.

Raffarin told parliament that he has instructed France's external intelligence agency, the DGSE, to contact Julia to see if he

has any information that could help free Aubenas, a veteran reporter for the Paris-based daily Liberation.

It is unclear why Aubenas called for Julia's help. Suspicions are that she was forced to by her captors. The lawmaker had contacts with the regime of Saddam Hussein and says he still has sources in the region.

Speaking on TF1 television

Tuesday, Julia said Aubenas' hostage-takers are "people who know me and who, probably, I know."

But Julia also seems to be trying to leverage Aubenas' appeal to get French authorities to drop an investigation against him and his associates for their botched attempt to intervene in the Chesnot-Malbrunot hostage crisis.

In an interview published Wednesday, Julia said he could "do nothing" for Aubenas because "the government has put chains around my feet."

Anti-war resolutions pass in 40 Vt. towns

BY LISA RATHKE

The Associated Press

UNDERHILL, Vt. — In this town of 3,000, nearly everyone knows someone fighting in Iraq. And that made an anti-war resolution very personal, a fact proponents and opponents tried to use to their advantage.

"I think this is a very relevant discussion to have here today," said proponent Matt Stiles. "The deployment of our Vermont Guard troops has had a very deep impact on our communities. I think probably most everyone here knows someone who has been deployed to Iraq."

Fifty-three residents are serving or have served in Iraq under the Vermont National Guard.

Stiles called on his neighbors to adopt an amended resolution pushed by opponents of the war that suggests the military is too reliant on guard troops and calls for a move toward the withdrawal of troops from Iraq.

Similar resolutions were before voters in roughly 50 communities across the state, mixed in from Town Meeting Day discussions on town budgets and other local issues.

Although not all towns had reported their results, organizers of the initiative counted 40 towns where some version of the resolution passed, three where it failed, three where voters decided not to vote on it and one where the vote was a tie.

"It's very exciting as much because of the quality of the debate," said Ben Scotch, an organizer of the campaign and retired executive director of the Vermont chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union. "It's not as if [people] agreed. People have not agreed about this war. ... But we're learning to talk about these things."

Vermont, one of the most rural states in the country, sends one of the highest proportion of its population to the military.

Several studies have said the state — with 14 killed in the war — has the highest per capita death toll of any state.

Among other communities where the resolution was approved were Brattleboro, Burlington, Norwich, Hinesburg, Marshfield, Rockingham, Theford, Westfield, Westminster, Weybridge, Johnson and Greensboro.



PHOTO BY SANDRA JONTZ/Stars and Stripes

The USS Emory S. Land, a submarine tender homeporting in La Maddalena, Sardinia, is anchored about three miles from the shores of Libreville, the capital of Gabon.

USS Emory S. Land taking the 'first step'

Goal is to help West African navies foster maritime security on own

BY SANDRA JONTZ

Stars and Stripes

LIBREVILLE, Gabon — The USS Emory S. Land's current deployment to Cameroon, Gabon and Ghana will serve as "a first step" in helping the West African navies foster maritime security on their own, a Navy leader said.

"It's a military-to-military effort with a main focus on theater security mission. ... We're providing lessons in shore-line security" that the African navies can use to curb illegal trafficking or provide protection of fisheries, said Rear Adm. C. Van Mauney, director of Navy Europe Plans and Operations and Commander Submarines Allied Naval Forces South.

The nations in the oil-rich Gulf of Guinea face problems with smuggling and piracy, as well as illegal dealings in drugs and weapons.

In late January, the Emory S. Land, based in Sardinia, Italy, began the two-month deployment with its main mission of teaching the African navies how to counter those problems.

Then, this summer, the U.S. Coast Guard will follow on the Land's mission, Petty Officer Donnie Brzuska said.

The 270-foot cutter USCGC Bear, based in Portsmouth, Va., and a crew of about 100, will "do humanitarian missions, search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, damage control and maintenance and repair of engineering systems," with the same African navies, Brzuska said.

"We're working with the Navy in developing a regional engagement plan, following the mission the Emory S. Land started there," Brzuska said. The idea for the 2005 Gulf of Guinea deployment grew from an October regional maritime security conference, in which naval leaders from 17 nations met to discuss ways forces could counter those nations' maritime problems and protect oil rigs against possible terrorist attacks.

Military visitors from countries such as Ghana, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe and Nigeria are aboard the 646-foot Emory S. Land. By the end of the deployment, they will have received about 1,500 hours of lessons ranging from navigation and seamanship to search and rescue, anti-terrorism force protection and dealing with the news media, said ship spokesman Lt. j.g. Greg Flores. Aboard, too, are observers from Britain, Portugal, Spain and France.

In addition to the problems the navies face in controlling illegal activities off their shores is that they don't have much of a navy to speak of. Many of Gabon's vessels, for example, sit in dry dock in Port Gentil, corroded and not seaworthy, U.S. sailors said.

"Years and years of the lack of preventative maintenance has destroyed a lot of their ships," said Chief Petty Officer Robert Hewitt, an engineer.

Instead of just doing the repair work for the African navies, Hewitt said, U.S. sailors are training African sailors so "they can be self-sustaining."

The Emory S. Land also has taken on a diplomatic role and humanitarian missions.

While in Douala, Cameroon, Port Gentil and Libreville, Gabon, and soon in Sekondi, Ghana, sailors will perform community-relations projects such as refurbishing orphanages and schools or playing soccer with local children.

"People of these countries see the U.S. Navy and think all we do is fight wars," said Chaplain (Lt. Cmdr.) Gabriel Mensah, a native of Ghana. "We're here to show the other side of the U.S. Navy."

E-mail Sandra Jontz at: jontzs@mail.strips.esd.mil

General: DOD to add special ops troops

BY LEO SHANE III
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department will add about 2,300 new special operations forces to its rolls over the next four years, including two Navy SEAL team equivalents and about 500 Green Berets, the commander of U.S. Special Operations Command told Congress this week.

Gen. Bryan D. Brown said the extra personnel are needed to keep up with the current demand on the elite teams, both for small-scale individual missions and as support for larger, multi-force operations.

"The old paradigm was any place, anytime," Brown said. "Today, we are focused on key areas that have an impact on the global war on terror."

About 1,400 of those new troops will be ready by October 2006,

Brown said. Recruitment and training for the posts usually take 12 to 24 months.

For the last year, about 6,100 special operations personnel have been deployed worldwide, the highest sustained level of activity ever, Brown said.

About 20 percent of that number are reservists, mostly serving as civil affairs and psychological operations officers.

While other military specialties are facing recruiting and retention shortfalls, Brown said he has not seen similar problems so far. All special operations personnel are eligible for education ben-

efits, and other targeted bonuses have also kept applicants interested.

But he did admit that the global demand on the special forces "has stretched the ability to train at the level we would like to."

The defense budget under consideration before Congress does include additional money for training and support services for the special operations teams. Brown said those plans must go forward to ensure future personnel meet the same standards as existing troops.



Brown

New focus on drugs

Gen. John P. Abizaid, commander of U.S. Central Command, told members of the House Armed Services Committee that military forces in Afghanistan need to focus on counter-narcotics work as well as counter-terror-

ist efforts for that country's new government to succeed.

"There's no doubt we have to be concerned about poppy cultivation and the drug trade," he said.

"Counter-drug needs to be up on the overall strategy list."

He added that he expects the process of removing the lucrative, illicit

legal drug sales from the Afghan economy to be a long and difficult process.

"What we don't want to do is adopt a program that will send the country back into insurgency," he said. "We have to have a smart, well-organized strategy that doesn't penalize the poor

farmer who doesn't have any other choices."

However, Abizaid noted that U.S. forces cannot simply decide to take the lead role in ending Afghanistan's drug trade.

Currently British authorities in Afghanistan are charged with monitoring and pursuing international narcotics issues within Afghanistan, and U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency officials oversee all American anti-drug efforts around the world.

Special Forces troops deployed as part of Operation Enduring Freedom have conducted some reconnaissance and narcotics seizure over the last several years, Brown said.

Abizaid said Afghan officials have begun addressing the problem with new counter-narcotics teams and a special unit to investigate the issue.

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Jones details EUCOM consolidation proposal

Plan would group all special ops at outpost south of Alps; Army to be split among 5 hubs

BY JON R. ANDERSON
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — U.S. military officials are in negotiations with host nations to consolidate Army, Navy and Air Force special operations units now spread throughout Europe to a consolidated outpost either in Spain or Sicily, according to the top commander of military forces in Europe.

Any plan would go to Congress for funding.

In an exclusive interview with Stars and Stripes, Marine Gen. James Jones, the chief of U.S. European Command, said the proposal is part of his sweeping reorganization of forces in Europe that will return thousands of troops back to the United States and consolidate remaining units into a small group of new basing hubs.

Jones hopes to reorganize forces to tackle emerging threats in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and much of Africa.

The Army will see the most changes, with 235 installations spread across 16 major communities mostly in Germany whittled down to a few dozen installations at five main hubs — four in Germany and one in Italy.

Jones said those five hubs would include the Grafenwöhr training area including Wiesbaden, Hohenfels-Vilseck; posts near Ramstein Air Base, including Kaiserslautern and Baumholder; a new consolidated aviation brigade hub in the Ansbach-Illesheim area; and Army facilities around Aviano Air Base, Italy, including an expanded Dal Molin air field to make room a third airborne infantry battalion and new support

units under the Southern European Task Force.

Congress is getting the bill for the initial stages for Jones' plan now, including more than \$1 billion earmarked for next year for improvements to "enduring" facilities in Europe.

"There's sticker shock here. It's very expensive," Jones told Stripes. Although he could not immediately put a price tag on the effort, he added, "It's a big bill. It's a huge bill."

Also, the upcoming Base Realignment and Closure process in the United States will play a key role in Europe's plans, said Jones, especially in determining where units will relocate as they leave.

Meanwhile, he said, "tweaking continues" on the overall plan.

Tucked inside Jones' prepared testimony before Congress this week are a slew of new details on what that plan includes. Among them:

■ **Special Operations** — Currently the Army's 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group is based in Germany, the Navy's SEAL teams split are between Spain and Germany and the Air Force's 325th Special Operations Group based in England. Jones said he hopes to consolidate the units onto one base. The two best candidates, he said, are existing Navy bases in either Rota, Spain, or Sigonella, Sicily. "We are looking for a position south of the Alps to better place our center of mass for special operations," Jones told Stripes.

■ **Aviation Brigade** — A "Multifunctional Aviation Brigade" will be created in the Ansbach-Illesheim area. It will include two Apache battalions, plus lift and aviation



GEOFFREY CARTER/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division Rear Operations Center undergo convoy live fire training at Grafenwöhr, Germany, as part of their pre-deployment training. A new brigade may be stationed at Grafenwöhr as part of the Army's transformation efforts.

support units.

■ **Enabler Brigade** — A new "combat enabler" brigade will be created at Grafenwöhr, where new barracks and family housing units are now being built. The brigade will include artillery, engineer, MPs, signal and logistics units.

■ **Stryker Brigade** — One of the new all-wheeled Stryker brigades will go to Vilseck, adjacent to Grafenwöhr, expected sometime around 2007.

■ **Eastern European Task Force** — The new Army headquarters will be based in Eastern Europe, with brigade-sized rotational units from Europe and the United States going to new base-bones "forward operating sites" in Romania and Bulgaria. One of the Stryker Brigade's battalions will be the first to rotate to Eastern Europe shortly after it arrives in Grafenwöhr.

■ **Black Sea pre-position site** — Jones told Stripes he hopes to establish an additional brigade-sized storehouse of gear and equipment on the Black Sea to augment ex-

isting sites in Italy and Norway, as well as beef up his flotilla of sea-based gear. "As we get out of the heavy divisions, we don't want to get out of the heavy equipment so that we can rapidly transition to a bigger force if we need it," said Jones.

■ **Re-basing schedule** — Plans call for 1st Infantry Division to return to the United States first, beginning in the summer of 2006, said Jones, followed by 1st Armored Division after it gets back from its upcoming deployment to Iraq. The merger of V Corps and USAREUR at Wiesbaden will be the last major movement, Jones emphasized, however, that the time line is subject to change as the war in Iraq, the BRAC process and competing funding priorities all play out.

"The plan is on the table," Jones. "There are a lot of cager people out there waiting to do things, but we need decisions and we need resources."

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IN THE STATES

High court tackles Commandments debate

BY HOPE YEN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Ten Commandments displays should be allowed on government property because they pay tribute to America's religious and legal history, the Supreme Court was told Wednesday, in cases that could render a new definition of the role that religion plays in the life of the nation.

"The idea of having a fence around the Ten Commandments to make clear the state has nothing to do with it, I think that is bending it too far," said acting Solicitor General Paul Clement, in arguing against a strict First Amendment wall between church and state.

David Friedman, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union who is challenging courthouse displays in Kentucky countered. "An assertion that the Ten Commandments is THE source, THE foundation of our legal system ... that is simply wrapping the Ten Commandments in the flag that's endorsement."

In their comments and questions from the bench, justices were reluctant to adopt a blanket ban on such displays. They struggled to formulate a constitutional rule that could determine the fate of thousands of religious



The Rev. Ken Johnson, center, from Seaman, Ohio, and Rev. Rob Schenck, right, president of Faith and Action join other members of clergy from numerous Christian faiths in prayers services for the Ten Commandments in front of the Supreme Court on Tuesday in Washington.

symbols on public property around the country, including one in their own courtroom featuring Moses holding the sacred tablets.

Justice Antonin Scalia noted that legislative proclamations and prayer invoking God's name

are permissible. "I don't see why the one is good and the other is bad," he said.

In the high court's first confrontation with the Ten Commandments issue in a quarter-century, a case from Texas also was being argued.

Erwin Chemerinsky, a lawyer representing a man who seeks its removal, told the justices the display is a "religious symbol."

The prominence of the display on the capitol grounds and the fact that so many of the commandments deal with God "does pro-

note religion," he maintained.

Monuments carrying the Ten Commandments are common in town squares, courthouses and other government-owned land around the country. Lawyers challenging these displays argue that they violate the First Amendment ban on any law "respecting an establishment of religion," or simply represent a secular tribute to America's legal heritage.

The question has sparked dozens of heated legal battles, including one in Alabama by Roy Moore. He lost his job as chief justice a year ago after defying a federal order to remove a 5,300-pound Ten Commandments monument he had installed in the state courthouse.

More than 50 groups have filed "friend-of-the-court" briefs weighing in on the issue.

About two dozen demonstrators gathered in front of the Supreme Court in the icy cold for rallies following a candlelight vigil by supporters of the displays.

"I don't think government should be in the business of morality," said David Condo, 40, of Beltsville, Md., as protesters wrapped in parkas, scarves and ear muffs marched nearby.

Blake trial arguments

LOS ANGELES — In his old days on "Baretta," actor Robert Blake played the good guy. On Wednesday, a prosecutor was ready to tell a jury in closing arguments that Blake crossed the line and became a killer.

Blake, 71, is accused of murdering his wife, Bonnie Lee Bakley, less than six months after their marriage. Prosecutors have tried to prove that Blake shot her outside a Studio City restaurant after failing to persuade two former stuntmen to do the job.

After closing arguments, the jury could get the case on Friday. It is convicted of murder, two counts of solicitation of murder and a special circumstance of lying in wait, Blake could be sentenced to life in prison.

Funds for ID theft fight

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Law enforcement officials attending the state's first summit on identity theft asked Tuesday for more money to combat the crime in California, the only state believed to have more than 1 million victims last year.

Legislators sought assistance from politicians, businesses and consumer advocates in their quest to prevent identity theft and crack down on thieves.

Sherry Leggett, a postal worker and consumer watchdog, wants to increase funding for prosecutors and for five state teams dedicated to identify theft. Current funding is about \$12.4 million per year.

From The Associated Press

Tenn. school bus driver killed; student in custody

The Associated Press

CUMBERLAND CITY, Tenn. — A school bus driver was shot to death as she drove her route Wednesday morning and a male student was taken into custody, authorities said. No students were hurt.

Law enforcement source who spoke on condition of anonymity told The Associated Press that the bus driver died.

At the time of the shooting, the bus was carrying up to 20 schoolchildren of all

ages, said Bill Austin, a supervisor for Stewart County schools.

The student taken into custody was identified only as a teenager.

The bus crashed into a utility pole at the driveway of the student's home and knocked out power in the rural neighborhood.

Stewart County school superintendent Philip Wallace declined to identify the driver but said she had worked for the schools for two years.

Prosecution in Jackson case brings up previous allegations

The Associated Press

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — Michael Jackson's prosecutors on Wednesday were able to get a witness to mention child molestation allegations that the pop star faced in 1993 but which did not result in charges.

The reference was made by a public relations specialist in front of the jury even though Superior Court Judge Michael S. Melville has not yet ruled on whether prosecutors in the current child molestation case will be allowed to present evidence from 1993.

Jackson, 46, is on trial on charges of molesting a 13-year-old cancer survivor at his Neverland ranch in 2003, giving him alcohol and conspiring to hold the boy's family captive.

The mention of the 1993 allegation came when prosecutors were questioning Ann Marie Kite, also known as Ann Gabriel Kite, about public relations problems Jack-

son faced in February 2003.

Kite listed both the Martin Bashir-produced documentary "Living With Michael Jackson," which triggered the current case, and the leaking of information from the 1993 allegations to the Web site thesmokinggun.com. Kite said the latter allegations involved inappropriate actions with a young boy.

The document released by the Web site was an affidavit from Jackson's 1993 accuser in which the boy graphically described alleged molestation by the singer.

"In combination with the Bashir documentary, I felt it was beyond a disaster," Kite said.

Defense attorney Thomas Mesereau Jr. objected to questions about 1993, and the judge cautioned jurors that they were not to consider the testimony as it related to explaining Kite's motivations and not for the "truth of the matter."

Bush says Syria must pull troops from Lebanon

The Associated Press

ARNOLD, Md. — President Bush on Wednesday demanded in blunt terms that Syria get out of Lebanon, saying the free world is in agreement that Damascus' authority over the political affairs of its neighbor must end now.

He applauded the strong message sent to Syria when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier held a joint news conference on London on Tuesday.

"Both of them stood up and said loud and clear to Syria, 'You get your troops and your secret services out of Lebanon so that good democracy has a chance to flourish,'" Bush said during an appearance at a community college in Maryland to tout his job training programs.

The world, Bush said, "is speaking with one voice when it comes to making sure that democracy has a chance to flourish in Lebanon."

The president's words, taken with those from Rice and others in the Bush administration this week, amount to the strongest pressure to date on Syria from Washington.

"Syria knows the concerns of the international community, and they know what they need to do to change their behavior and become a constructive member of the region and the international community," White House press secretary Scott McClellan said earlier Wednesday.

Turkish ambassador Osman Faruk Logoglu urged the administration to offer trade and other economic and diplomatic incentives to Syria.

"The chances of Syria withdrawing are greater than ever before," Logoglu told reporters. "But it is obviously going to take a long time."

Go attacks critics of Social Security plan

BY DAVID ESPRO

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Republicans attacked the AARP as well as congressional Democrats on Wednesday as they struggled to build momentum behind President Bush's call for personal investment accounts under Social Security.

AARP, which claims 35 million members age 50 and older, is "against a solution that hasn't been written yet," said House Majority Leader Tom DeLay after a closed-door meeting with the GOP rank and file.

He called the group's opposition to personal accounts irresponsible and hypocritical, adding that it sells mutual funds to its own membership.

DeLay, Hastert go on the offensive against AARP, congressional Democrats in debate on Bush effort

A spokeswoman for the organization had no immediate comment.

DeLay and Speaker Dennis Hastert also criticized congressional Democrats, who are virtually united in opposition to Bush's plans.

"The party of no," Hastert called them. Hastert and DeLay talked with reporters after meeting with lawmakers just back from a week session sampling public opinion on Social Security. DeLay said the session produced "not one negative comment by the members."

At the same time, both he and Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist left open the possibility on Tuesday that final action may not be possible this year, and the Texas Republican conceded that opponents of Bush's plans were better organized than supporters.

Both DeLay and Hastert said Republicans are determined to move ahead with Bush's proposals, and several Republicans said they believe the president's national campaigning is slowly raising public awareness of the issue.

Bush and congressional Repub-

licans have consistently sought to coax Democrats into negotiations on Social Security. Democrats have just as insistently resisted, arguing that since Republicans control the White House and both houses of Congress, they must first present a comprehensive Social Security proposal of their own.

Democrats contend Bush and Republicans want to cut benefits to pay for privatizing part of the Depression-era program, and have made clear they intend to try and use the issue at the 2006 elections.

Bush has said his plan would guarantee that Social Security benefits would remain unchanged for retirees and workers age 55 and over.

Younger Americans would be allowed to invest a portion of their payroll taxes on their own. In exchange they would receive a lower government benefit than they are now guaranteed, on the assumption that the proceeds of their investments would make up the difference. In addition, though, even younger voters who choose not to establish personal accounts would receive a reduced government benefit under Bush's plan, according to GOP congressional officials who have been briefed on the plan.

Fossett discovers problem with fuel

The Associated Press

SALINA, Kan. — Millionaire adventurer Steve Fossett discovered a serious problem with the fuel system of his custom-built plane Wednesday, forcing him to consider abandoning his quest to become the first person to fly solo nonstop around the world without refueling.

"There's a big go, no-go decision that the team has to make," said project manager Paul Moore as Fossett's mission control team was reviewing data.

Fossett and his GlobalFlyer were still over Japan shortly after 11 a.m. EST, and he had decided to fly on toward Hawaii. He'd decide there whether to continue heading east for the U.S. mainland.

"This is a huge setback," Fossett said from the plane, according to a statement issued by his mission control staff. "I have not that high a level of confidence at this point."

Moore said fuel sensors in the



Steve Fossett's Virgin Atlantic GlobalFlyer passes over the Atlas Mountains in Morocco on Tuesday. Millionaire adventurer Fossett is attempting the first solo, nonstop flight around the globe in the custom-built plane, although his attempt may be sidlined by a serious problem with the fuel system discovered Wednesday.

13 tanks differ from readings of how quickly the plane's single jet engine was burning fuel. Moore said the crew had been forced to assume that 2,600 pounds of the original 18,100 pounds of fuel "disappeared" early in the flight.

It wasn't clear whether the problem was with the instruments that track how much fuel remains or if some fuel had been lost because of a leak, Fossett's team said.

The GlobalFlyer was estimated to have about 5,500 pounds of fuel left as Fossett approached Japan. Moore said that was about 15 percent less than the team estimated he needed to finish his flight.

"Understandably, Steve's way down," Moore said.

Fossett, 60, still might be able to finish the flight on his original path, if a tail wind in the jet stream remains strong enough to push him across the Pacific.

Before the fuel problem was discovered, Fossett had estimated he would complete the 23,000-mile journey at midday Thursday. He already holds the record for flying solo around the globe in a balloon, as well as dozens of other aviation and sailing records.

The project is being financed by Virgin Atlantic founder Sir Richard Branson, a longtime friend and fellow adventurer.

Plea in terror charge

DETROIT — A man accused of hosting fund-raising meetings for a Muslim guerrilla group at his home pleaded guilty to a terrorism charge, prosecutors said.

Federal prosecutors announced Tuesday that Mahmoud Yousef Kourani hosted meetings in 2002 at which a speaker from Lebanon solicited donations for the group Hezbollah, which the United States has designated as a terrorist organization.

Under a plea agreement, Kourani, 33, faces no more than five years in prison. The Detroit News reported. Sentencing is scheduled for June 14.

Fault found with Ford

CRYSTAL CITY, Texas — A Zavala County jury has hit Ford Motor Co. with a \$28 million verdict in a fatal rollover, despite evidence that the driver had been drinking before the accident and was driving at an unsafe speed.

The decision awarded another \$3 million in damages against Steven Guerrero Jr., who was behind the wheel of the 2000 Explorer at the time of the May 2003 crash.

Corina Garcia and Diana Alicia Alonzo, both 19, were thrown from the vehicle and killed. Passenger Arturo Guerrero, 18, and driver Saul Guerrero, 19, were also ejected but not seriously injured.

Plaintiff's lawyers had argued most of the blame lay with the automaker for using tempered side glass despite learning more than 30 years ago that laminated glass reduced the risk of passengers being ejected in a wreck.

Ga. executes man

JACKSON, Ga. — A man was executed for the slaying of a pizza shop manager during a 1991 robbery spree. It was the second execution in Georgia this year.

Stephen A. Mobley, 39, was pronounced dead at 8 p.m. Tuesday after he was given an injection of chemicals at the state prison at Jackson.

From The Associated Press

Lawmakers examine reports of U.N. mismanagement

BY KEN GUGGENHEIM

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Members of Congress pressing for reforms at the United Nations are looking into possible mismanagement of \$219 million in equipment by U.N. officials.

Details of the mismanagement were included in a U.N. audit last year and described in a statement released by the U.S. mission to the United Nations in October.

That statement received little notice at the time but is getting fresh attention from the House International Relations investigations subcommittee, which will hold a hearing on U.N. operations Wednesday.

The hearing comes as the International Re-

lations Committee looks to expand its investigation of the U.N. oil-for-food program into a broader examination of U.N. management.

The Oct. 18 statement by the U.S. mission referred to a series of problems found by auditors.

It said auditors were unable "to verify the validity, accuracy and completeness" in the accounting of equipment by four U.N. programs: \$149.3 million by the U.N. Development Program, \$57.5 million by the U.N. Population Fund, \$10 million by the U.N. Office for Project Services and \$2.4 million by the U.N. Habitat Settlement Rehabilitation Program.

The U.S. mission also raised concerns that "poor financial management practices" exposed the United Nations to unnecessary risks

and that several U.N. departments lacked standards for hiring consultants and the selection process was not competitive.

The issues addressed by the mission add to the case made by the committee that the United Nations needs major changes. Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., has suggested he may try to tie U.S. funding for the organization to reforms.

The U.N. assistant secretary-general for peacekeeping operations, Jane Holl Lute, appeared before another House International Relations subcommittee Tuesday and said the organization is working to stop abuse.

"We will not sit still until the luster of the blue helmet is restored," Lute said, referring to the helmets worn by peacekeepers.

Desmond Butler of The Associated Press contributed to this report in New York.

College students testing pieces of doomed shuttle

BY MICHAEL RUBINKAM
The Associated Press

BETHLEHEM, Pa. — When the space shuttle Columbia broke apart over Texas, it scattered 84,000 pieces of debris, most of which have never been closely analyzed.

Now, two years after the disaster that killed seven astronauts, Lehigh University students are getting a rare look at these unexamined parts — and NASA hopes their findings might contribute to the design of the next generation of space vehicles.

The eastern Pennsylvania school known for its engineering and science programs is the first university in the nation to be given access to the shuttle debris. A shipment of 50 pieces arrived last week.

Seniors are looking at each part under powerful electron and light microscopes, trying to determine when and why the part stopped working and how it reacted under the extreme forces to which it was subjected.

Microscopy will reveal the "tell-tale signs of the mode of failure," said Lehigh professor Arnold



Lehigh University professor Arnold Marder on Monday holds up pieces of debris from the space shuttle Columbia disaster Monday during his class at the university's Whitaker Laboratory's Failure-Analysis Lab in Bethlehem, Pa. Students at the school are studying the debris.

Marder, a materials science expert.

NASA's collaboration with Lehigh is part of a program under which pieces of the shuttle are being released to the aerospace industry for research. Students will present their findings to NASA officials in April.

While NASA scientists have given every piece of debris a cursory examination, most of their efforts were focused on the hunk of foam that tore away from the fuel tank during liftoff and caused a gash in the shuttle's left wing. That gash led to Columbia's destruction during re-entry.

Report: Cell phone use while driving increases

WASHINGTON — More people than ever are driving under the influence of their cell phones, according to a survey released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The survey released Tuesday showed 8 percent of drivers, or 1.2 million people, were using hand-held or handsfree cell phones during daylight hours last year, a 50 percent increase since 2002 and a 100 percent rise in four years.

All that talking is a potential safety issue, said NHTSA spokesman Rae Tyson.

"While we don't have hard evidence that there's been an increase in the number of crashes, we know that talking on the phone can degrade driver performance," Tyson said.

New York, New Jersey and the District of Columbia prohibit talking on hand-held cell phones while driving, according to the Governors Highway Safety Association.

Topeka keeps law barring discrimination

TOPEKA, Kan. — A minister known for picketing the funerals of AIDS victims failed in his attempt to repeal a Topeka ordinance that prohibits discrimination against homosexuals in municipal hiring.

The Rev. Fred Phelps Sr. was unaided after voters upheld the anti-discrimination measure Tuesday and publicly dared the City Council to enact another, broader ordinance.

"If you succeed in passing a gay-rights ordinance, the next morning, we'll be back on the streets, collecting signatures," he said.

In final, unofficial results, 53 percent, or 14,285, opposed the repeal effort, while 47 percent, or 12,795, voted for the repeal.

Had it passed, the measure also would have blocked future efforts to reinstate such a law for 10 years.

Justice removes citizenship of former Nazi guard

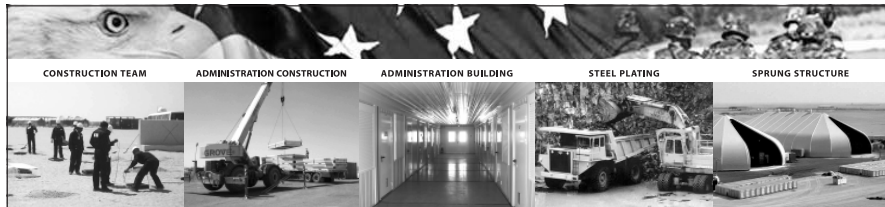
DETROIT — A federal judge stripped a man of his citizenship because he hid his past as a guard at a Nazi labor camp and should never have entered the United States.

U.S. District Judge Paul Gadola agreed with government prosecutors who said Ivan Mandycz was an armed guard at the Poniatowa labor camp near Lublin, Poland, for nearly six months in 1943, the Detroit Free Press reported in Wednesday's editions.

The Justice Department first initiated denaturalization proceedings against Mandycz in April 2000.

Mandycz, who is in his 80s, can appeal. If the ruling stands, the government could initiate deportation proceedings against him.

From The Associated Press



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'NYPD Blue' signs off after 12 seasons



Dennis Franz — whose character, Andy Sipowicz, has to make some tough decisions as he starts a new chapter in his life — stars in the final episode of ABC's "NYPD Blue," which aired Tuesday in the States.

BY DAVID BAUDER
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — "NYPD Blue" ended its 12-year run with Detective Andy Sipowicz making a tough decision that put his new job as commander in jeopardy.

The 261st and last episode of the groundbreaking police drama aired on ABC on Tuesday in the States after a one-hour retrospective.

"NYPD Blue" had settled into old age, in television time, with only actor Dennis Franz's Sipowicz and Gordon Clapp's Detective Greg Medavoy remaining as featured cast members from the first season to the last.

Eclipsed by hotter dramas, "NYPD Blue" inhabited a middle-of-the-pack No. 49 ranking among Nielsen Media Research's top prime-time shows, with roughly half the regular audience it had at its peak.

From the beginning, the show attracted attention for barrier-breaking language and content, including a glimpse of Sipowicz's rear end in the shower. But the quality of co-creators Steven Bochco and David Milch's series — it earned 20 Emmys, including best drama in 1995 — kept viewers tuning in.

At one point, Sipowicz wasn't even supposed to survive the first episode. But the flawed everyman became the show's emotional center, and earned Franz Emmys for best actor in 1994, 1996, 1997 and 1999.

David Caruso left after one season as Sipowicz's partner, John Kelly. He was followed by Jimmy Smits' Bobby Simone, Rick Schroder's Danny Sorenson and Mark-Paul Gosselaar's John Clark.

Smits narrated the low-key retrospective that preceded the final

episode, explaining the series' central idea: "What if you took a format everyone was comfortable with — a cop show — and turn up the volume?"

The special was blunt about how offscreen dramas affected the show. Milch, who left after the seventh season, explained how Sipowicz's struggles with alcoholism mirrored his own.

"Let's just say Sipowicz got sober before I did," Milch said.

Smits said the chaotic work environment, with the clock hand-driven to him minutes before he was to go on camera, ultimately led to his decision to leave. The only missing piece to the special was the absence of Caruso, now the star of CBS's "CSI: Miami."

At the end of the special, several of the cast members took the time to address fans directly on camera. The last to go was Franz.

"Thank you," he said. "Thank you one and all."

Report: Galaxies 11 billion light-years away discovered

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — NASA scientists used an infrared telescope to see past stardust and spot hidden galaxies more than 11 billion light-years from the Earth, according to a journal article published Tuesday.

Scientists used the Spitzer Space Telescope to find the galaxies, the most luminous in the universe. The galaxies shine with light equivalent to 10 trillion suns but were too far away and too drenched in cosmic dust to be seen — until now.

"We are seeing galaxies that are essentially invisible," said Professor Dan Weedman of Cornell University, in Ithaca, N.Y.

Weedman co-authored an article detailing the discovery in the latest issue of *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

Five infrared missions hinted at the presence of similarly dusty galaxies over 20 years ago, but those galaxies were closer.

We had to wait for Spitzer to peer far enough into the distant universe to find these," he said.

Spitzer, a \$670 million mission launched in August 2003, is managed by NASA's Jet Propulsion

Laboratory in Pasadena. Science operations are conducted by the Spitzer Science Center at the California Institute of Technology.

There are still many unanswered questions. Astronomers say the galaxies' brightness may stem from a new breed of quasars, which are powered by giant black holes, but scientists are unsure where all the dust comes from. They know stars churn it out, but they are trying to find out how the cosmic dust gets stirred through the galaxies.

They also want to know if galaxies like these will eventually grow as dim as the Milky Way.

"It's possible stars like our sun grew up in dustier, brighter neighborhoods, but we really don't know. By studying these galaxies, we'll get a better idea of our own galaxy's history," said Professor James Houck, also of Cornell, and lead author of the study.

The Cornell-led team identified 31 galaxies that can only be seen with the aid of Spitzer. The team also found that more than half of the galaxies have dust grain known as silicate, which helped astronomers determine how far away the galaxies are from Earth.

New face to U.S. nickel

The U.S. Mint has updated the image of President Thomas Jefferson used on the nickel for the first time since 1938; it appears on the last two of the four-coin "Westward Journey" series.

New 'heads' side

Tails of two new "Westward Journey" nickels



■ Portrait based on 1789 bust by sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon
■ Word "Liberty" in Jefferson's handwriting



"American Bison" nickel resembles back of 1913-1938 "Buffalo nickel"; released Monday



"Ocean in view! O! The joy!" Entry in Lewis and Clark expedition's journal, on reaching Pacific Ocean; to be released later this year

No small change: The nickel since 1913



Buffalo nickel, 1913-1938: Indian head (heads), buffalo (tails); replaced "Liberty" nickel



Jefferson nickel, 1938-2005: Profile of Jefferson (heads); his historic home, Monticello, (tails)



First two "Westward Journey" Nickels, 2004: Heads side unchanged; tails depict "Louisiana Purchase/Peace Medal" (left) and Lewis and Clark's keelboat (right)

Thompson allegedly found in front of typewriter

ASPEN, Colo. — Hunter S. Thompson's body was found in a chair in the kitchen in front of his typewriter with the word "counselor" typed in the center of the page, according to sheriff's reports.

The word was typed on stationery from the Fourth Amendment Foundation, which was started to defend victims of unwarranted search and seizure, according to reports released Tuesday.

Juan Thompson found his father dead Feb. 20 from a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. After reporting the death, Juan Thompson walked outside the Woody Creek home and fired three shotgun blasts into the air. "Juan told me he had shot a shotgun into the air to mark the passing of his father," Pitkin County Deputy Sheriff John Armstrong said in his report.

The couple and their 6-year-old son were in the house when Thompson, 67, took a handgun, put it to his mouth and fired.

A soft-sided gun case was found at Thompson's feet, along with a spent shell casing, according to reports.

From The Associated Press

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With 2,000-pound Cody the bison standing as a silent witness, the U.S. Mint marked the return of the buffalo nickel Tuesday after a 67-year absence.

Accompanied by Indian dancing, drum-beating and chanting, U.S. Mint Director Henrietta Human Fone displayed the new nickels publicly for the first time during a ceremony on the snowy grounds of Capitol Hill with Cody

standing patiently next to her, occasionally snorting in the cold air.

Some 97 million of the five-cent coins are being shipped this week from the Federal Reserve's 12 regional banks to local banks around the country. They should start showing up in store cash registers within the next two weeks.

The new nickel features a jazzed-up profile of Thomas Jefferson on one side and a bison standing on a clump of grass on the other side. It marks the return of the bison to the nickel for the

first time since 1938, when the Mint changed the design of the five-cent pieces from one depicting an American Indian on one side and a buffalo on the other.

The bison nickel is the third in a series of four new nickels that commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition, both of which occurred during the administration of Jefferson, the nation's third president.

The coins can also be purchased from the Mint's Web site.

U.S. Mint unveils new nickel

IN THE WORLD

Sirus Naseri, head of the Iranian delegation, delivers a press statement after the morning session of the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board of governors on Wednesday at Vienna's International Center.

AP



U.S. accuses Iran of deceit

BY ANDREA DUDIKOVA

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — The United States accused Iran on Wednesday of "cynically" pursuing nuclear weapons, saying Tehran's claims that its aims were peaceful constituted willful deceit and required action by the U.N. Security Council.

Jackie Sanders, chief U.S. delegate to the International Atomic Energy Agency board of governors, also urged North Korea to scrap its nuclear weapons program and resume negotiations.

The 35-member IAEA board sought agreement on a statement urging the North to return to negotiations and end nuclear threats. Sanders' comments were in response to an agency update on Tehran's nuclear record after more than two years of examination.

Sanders characterized the IAEA report as a "startling list of Iranian attempts to hide and mislead and delay the work" of agency experts probing the country's nuclear activities.

In urging support for the U.S. drive for referral of Iran to the U.N. Security Council where it could face sanctions — which past board meetings have refused to do — Sanders said, "the board has a statutory obligation to so."

The IAEA review noted that while Iran allowed inspectors an initial Parchin military complex visit in mid-January, the experts' visits were limited to one site and only five buildings on that site. A new request to revisit another part of the site was refused by Iran on Sunday, the report added.

The United States alleges that Iran may be testing high-explosive components for nuclear weapons, using an inert core of depleted uranium at Parchin as a dry run for a bomb that would use fissile material.

Iran asserts that its military is not involved in nuclear activities, and the IAEA has found no firm evidence to the contrary. The agency also has not been able to support U.S. assertions that nearly 20 years of covert nuclear programs discovered more than two years ago were aimed at making nuclear weapons — not generating electricity, as Tehran claims.

But Iran insists on its right to enrichment. "This is something that is not on the table and will not be on the table," senior Iranian envoy Sirous Nasser told reporters, saying his country had "gone through blood and sweat and tears" to develop the program.

Peacekeepers kill Congo militiamen

BY BRYAN WEALE

The Associated Press

KINSHASA, Congo — U.N. peacekeepers killed as many as 60 militiamen in a stepped-up campaign to clear northeastern Congo of rogue gunmen who have preyed on residents for years and are suspected in the recent slaying of nine peacekeepers, U.N. officials said Wednesday.

The peacekeepers, backed by an attack helicopter and responding to fire, killed more people than in any other operation during their six-year mission in Congo.

Tuesday's gun battle between 242 Pakistani peacekeepers and militia fighters broke out at a heavily fortified militia camp near the village of Loga, 19 miles north of Bunia, the capital of the lawless Ituri province, said Col. Dominique Demange, spokesman for the U.N. forces in Congo.

Militia fighter opened fire on approaching peacekeepers with heavy machine guns and anti-tank artillery, said Demange.

See more world stories on Page 14

Peacekeepers fired return salvos and called in an attack helicopter against the barricaded fighters, said Demange. He said between 50 and 60 militia members had been confirmed dead.

Two peacekeepers were wounded in the barrage of gunfire and evacuated to South Africa, said U.N. spokeswoman Eliane Nabaa.

The militia, which belongs to the ethnic Lendu political party Nationalist and Integrationist Front, has been terrorizing villages of the rival Hema tribe for months. Tribal fighters have killed dozens of people, looted and burned homes, and forced over 70,000 people to flee to the hills since December.

The United Nations suspects the same militia is responsible for slaying the nine Bangladeshi peacekeepers in well-executed ambush on Feb. 25.

Egypt, Saudi Arabia try to get Syria to leave Lebanon

BY SAM F. GHATTAS

The Associated Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Egypt and Saudi Arabia have stepped in to persuade Syria to withdraw from Lebanon and avoid a showdown with the world, Arab diplomats say, while a few hundred activists in Beirut on Wednesday kept going with anti-Syrian demonstrations that toppled Lebanon's government.

Lebanon's staunchly pro-Syrian president, Emile Lahoud, began the search for a new prime minister to replace Omar Karami, meeting with the speaker of parliament amid opposition pressure to ensure the new government is not dominated by Damascus.

Lebanon's worst political crisis in years has increasingly isolated Syria, with even its traditional ally Russia joining the United States, France and the United Nations in calling on Damascus to pull its 15,000 troops out of its neighbor, where it has wielded power for more than a decade.

The two Arab powerhouses are trying to win Syrian acceptance

of a timetable for a complete withdrawal by April.

The initiative is expected to be raised during a meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Cairo late Wednesday ahead of an official meeting the next day to prepare for an Arab summit in Algeria in March. The United States, along with France, has stepped up its pressure on Syria.

The crisis also began to have economic effects in Lebanon, a traditional center of banking and commerce. Worries over where the rapidly unfolding events are taking the country prompted a rush on U.S. dollars, forcing Lebanon's Central Bank to intervene to support the pound.

Lebanese opposition leader Walid Jumblatt demanded Wednesday that Syria give precise dates for withdrawing its 15,000 troops from Lebanon. Syrian President Bashar Assad told Time magazine that his forces could leave Lebanon "maybe in the next few months. Not after that."

Jumblatt has said Lahoud should resign, but other opposition leaders have said that is not on their agenda.

Palestinian leader optimistic about peace deal

The Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas said Wednesday he was optimistic Palestinians and Israelis could take advantage of a "new era of peace and hope" to reach a final peace deal that will see the realization of Palestinian statehood.

Abbas, who held talks with senior European Union officials, reiterated he was serious in implementing reforms to rein in militants. Earlier, in talks with EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana, Abbas said he wanted Palestinian statehood "as soon as possible."

Abbas was making his first visit to EU headquar-

ters as the Palestinian Authority's new leader to drum up support for his reforms.

He urged EU nations to "continue to play their role politically, economically and socially" to back Palestinians, especially in reconstruction efforts.

Abbas told European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso that he hoped the EU would continue to provide funding for the rebuilding of key infrastructure like schools, bridges, roads and seaports, some of which were destroyed in fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants.

Abbas flew to Brussels after attending an international conference on the Middle East in London, where he pledged to improve the Palestinian Authority's security services.

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KBR remarks off base

The author of "KBR needs some healthy competition" (column, G. Jefferson Price Feb. 11) has obviously never stepped foot in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom because his article was filled with speculation that was way off base.

For starters, KBR is serving the military in the same way it has been doing in every major theater of military operations since Vietnam, long before President Bush or Vice President Dick Cheney.

Furthermore, KBR is the primary contractor here because it is one of the premier construction and logistics companies in the world. Few companies have the ability to take on a project of this magnitude. Iraqi contractors, using ancient equipment and methods of building just as old, have started construction in this camp but, after the building they were working on was deemed unsafe, and mortar and rocket attacks spiked, they were let go.

As far as the food, as a matter of fact we have mess halls filled with Lebanese workers who frequently prepare a full Middle Eastern bar, which goes largely unnoticed by Americans, by my accounts.

On a daily basis, three times a day in fact, our military personnel are provided with a smorgasbord of delicious American food that's piled high on their plates. Rest assured, nobody from this camp will ever go without a good, hot meal given the fact that we have a full kitchen.

The author of that column has surely taken into consideration the reports of insurgents infiltrating the Iraqi police and

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army to sabotage them when they suggests that we should buy our food from them. Maybe he could come be the official taste tester, and help put his tax money to good use.

Tom Crist
Camp Liberty, Iraq

Grade-school errors frequent

I've noted with pleasure recent letters encouraging proper use of the English language. I, too, cringe when I'm "orientated" to a map showing the location of a recently captured "kash-ay," ("No cashet with 'kash-ay,'" letter, Feb. 17)

Political system best for DOD civilians

The Washington Post

As promised, the Defense Department has followed the Department of Homeland Security in proposing new rules on promotion and pay for its 770,000 civilian employees. Like those proposed at DHS, the new Defense Department rules are intended to modernize a large and often unwieldy bureaucracy, and to better prepare it for the post-Sept. 11 world. As at DHS, the Pentagon's new rules sound terrific on paper.

The proposed regulations allow "agile and responsive workforce," "fiscally sound" management, and a "credible and trusted" system that ensures accountability and fairness. The new arrangement, known as the National Security Personnel System, is above all intended to link pay more closely to employee performance. Subtly, it may even give performance priority over seniority in hiring and

firing decisions.

And—just like the Department of Homeland Security's proposed changes—the proposed Defense Department civil service reform raises a number of alarms. This is not because it is wrong in principle, but rather because it contains in practice a number of changes that, if not monitored, lead to the greater politicization of what should be a neutral government department. An extremely complex system of distributing performance-based pay is proposed, with few details about how performance will actually be measured. It isn't immediately clear, for example, how performance measures in the military will differ from those in the civilian system. Without clarity—and extensive training for managers—it would take very little for politicization to creep in.

Second, this proposed reform, as well as its predecessors, appears to curtail union rights in unnecessary ways. Although Pentagon officials deny it, some government employees unionize, and they were not properly consulted on the new rules, as the law requires, and they have filed a lawsuit. Union officials also say the new rules seem designed to take away workers' rights, without any clear explanation of why this is necessary. At the moment, for example, they say managers are allowed but not required to bargain with unions over job placements and assignments; the new rules appear to forbid any bargaining. The same is true of decisions about overtime. Officials ought to explain what, if anything, these changes have to do with national security, as opposed to weakening the unions.

More important, Congress ought to ask for explanations and explore in greater depth the whole issue of civil service reform. Because these personnel decisions involve so many people, and could have national impact, lawmakers should consider stepping in to help define what performance criteria mean, to preserve a meaningful appeals process and to ensure that unions stay involved in government employee affairs, at least when there is no reason to bar them.

Doonesbury Flashbacks



BY GARRY TRUDEAU

OPINION

N. Korea's taking points: At a loss for words

THE North Korean nuclear issue is lurching inexorably toward another moment of crisis. It is a crisis no one wants — except maybe the North Koreans.

Daniel Snieder



Here in South Korea, the government would love to turn its focus to a shaky economy. An escalation of tensions from their difficult northern brothers is the last thing it needs.

And the Bush administration has its sights set on other targets, such as Iran and Syria, not to mention Iraq. While its enthusiasm for sitting down at the table with the North Korean dictatorship of Kim Jong Il has always been minimal, keeping the talks going preserves the illusion that something is being done.

Unfortunately for all of these governments, the North Koreans have, once again, turned over the table.

A few weeks ago, everyone was optimistic that Pyongyang, after an absence of nearly eight months, was about to announce resumption of the six-party talks, which also include Japan and Russia. Instead, on Feb. 10, the North Koreans suspended the bargain-

ing, pointing to various signs that, as in Iraq, President Bush remained intent on regime change, not denuclearization.

They proclaimed, in the clearest wording to date, that they already had "manufactured" nuclear weapons. It removed another layer of what a senior South Korean official calls "manageable ambiguity" about the North Korean program. As long as everyone can credibly deny that there is clear proof the weapons exist, they can justify the less-than-urgent pace of their diplomacy.

The Chinese send a delegation to Pyongyang anyway to try to drag their recalcitrant ally back. They carried sticks — hints they may close down border traffic — and carrots — possibly increased oil shipments. In return, they got a public statement by the mercenary Kim.

We will come back to the talks, Kim said in essence, but only when we are convinced, by words and actions, that the Bush administration is not intent on overthrowing my regime. South Korean officials rushed to embrace Kim's wording as a positive shift, a view echoed by U.S. officials.

But, as South Korean officials admit privately, what Kim said is no different from what was said two weeks ago. Pyongyang still claims to need something from Washington as a "condition" for returning to the table.

The Chinese express confidence that talks will resume shortly, but they urge "flexibility" on the part of both North Korea and the United States. Privately, Chinese officials are urging the Bush administration to respond to Kim.

Analysts here talk about providing Kim with a face-saving excuse to return to the table — a declaration from Bush or Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that the United States has "no hostile intent" toward



THE AVIATOR...

North Korea, or that it accepts "peaceful co-existence." Those phrases, they say, more clearly state a willingness to accept the legitimacy of the Pyongyang regime as a negotiating partner.

Negotiators from Japan, the United States and South Korea met here Saturday to plan their next step, but Bush officials signaled they have no plans to yield to the North's conditions. Seoul also is not eager to challenge that stance.

"There should be no price tag for attending the talks," a senior South Korean foreign ministry official told me. "The U.S. did their part."

The Chinese may succeed in organizing another round of talks — but it might be better if they fail. The collapse of the illusion of

talks may be the only way to get to real negotiations.

The Bush administration might finally have to decide whether it is ready to accept the continued existence of the North Korean regime as a price for removing its nuclear weapons.

Pyongyang will finally have to decide if it is willing to give up the nukes — a choice it has skillfully avoided through these non-negotiations. And a crisis might also compel the South Korean government to use its desire to engage the North as real leverage by freeing the economic openings that have been forged. In the end, no deal may be possible. But the sooner we find that out — one way or another — the better.

Daniel Snieder is senior affairs columnist for the San Jose (Calif.) Mercury News.

We're categorically denied the right to eschew labels

BY SUSAN BENJAMIN

YOU have to be living in a closet to miss hearing about the new book, "The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln," whose author, C.A. Tripp, claims Honest Abe was gay. To that, I have two responses.

My first response: Who cares? Look, Abe was not dating the Confederates, he was militarily challenging them. How his sexual proclivity — gay, straight or otherwise — matters in the scheme of things is beyond me.

My second response: What's with these postmortem analyses, anyway? Not only have we outed Lincoln about 150 years after his death, but we've psychanalyzed an ill-gadged, countless, deceased others. Take Emily Dickinson. Allegedly, Emily was not melancholic or eccentric, as we'd previously believed. She suffered from ... Light Depression Syndrome, and more impressively, manic-depression, before there was manic-depression.

Van Gogh, as you probably heard, was also manic and Napoleon, no surprise, suffered from acute narcissism. But did you hear about Albert Einstein? No mere genius with his head in the clouds — he was actually ADD. Not to be mistaken for the more-revved-up model — ADHD.

I learned this recently at a leadership conference. For some reason, my neighbor and I were whispering about the subject of grades when I mentioned Einstein was supposedly an average student. That's when my neighbor whispered the news: "And he was ADD."

Ah-hah! Add. That explains everything. Of course, it isn't just the dead we force into categories. At that point in the confer-

ence, the topic was situational leadership and the participants were filling out a questionnaire to discover whether they had a High Task-Low Relationship (HT-LR) style or a Low Task-Low Relationship (LT-LR) style or a High Task-High Relationship (HT-HR) style or ... well, you know.

This, naturally enough, was on the heels of the Myers-Briggs test that, in the off-chance you haven't taken it, tells you whether you're an Introvert-Sensing-Intuitive-Perceiving (ISTP) or an Extrovert-Intuitive-Feeling-Judging (ENFJ). Lucky for me, my neighbor, herself ADD, was also a certified Myers-Briggs expert and could help me with the calculations. You see, I thought I was ENFJ, but really an ENFJ. Thank heavens she helped. Can you imagine the confusion that may have resulted.

All this categorizing and classifying of the living and dead points to one conclusion: As a society, we have become High Category (HC) and Low Mystery (LM) and not the other way around. You see, High Category people can explain everything. Got a kid who's wired? Can't focus in school? It's the dreaded ADHD. Hate your marriage? You're depressed.

By the way, I don't have to mention the importance of HC in the political realm, I'm sure. How good it was when George W. dragged the "L" word (liberal, in case you've forgotten) out of retirement so those who thought Kerry was a Viable Candidate (VC) would understand he's merely an "L." Worse, an MA-L.

As for HMs? Well, around the time of Einstein, Dickinson, Lincoln and, oh, everyone else, most people were HM. HMs believed love, moral decisions, personality types, you name it, were part of a grand mystery, too complex for easy answers. Instead, they grappled: Dickinson with her poetry, Einstein with his theories, and Lincoln with his angst over going to war. Imagine that. There are plenty of HMs around today. I'm sure, only one no one knows how many. We won't take the test to find out. But hold on, maybe someone, long after they're gone, will find a category anyway and, you can be sure, will write a book about them.

Susan Benjamin is a Washington-based writing consultant. She is completing her second book: *Eight Words for Beauty, Sex, Marriage and Mommy and What They Secretly Say About You*.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



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Macedonia leader wants border dispute fixed before status talks

BY FISNIK ABRASHI
The Associated Press

PRISTINA, Serbia-Montenegro — Macedonia's prime minister said Wednesday that a border dispute with Kosovo should be resolved before the start of any talks on the status of the U.N.-run province.

Prime Minister Vlado Buckovski said resolution of the issue would ensure further stability for Macedonia and also would benefit Kosovo, a province that remains disputed between Serbia-Montenegro and Kosovo's ethnic Albanians.

Buckovski spoke following a meeting with Kosovo's top U.N. official, Soren Jessen-Petersen. Buckovski also met with Kosovo's prime minister, Ramush Haradinaj. Jessen-Petersen encouraged Macedonia to have "direct dialogue in an informal way" with Kosovo's leaders to try to resolve the dispute, while keeping Belgrade informed.

Haradinaj said after the meeting that there is "good will" and he is hopeful the dispute will be solved "at the right moment."

But in an apparent snub to Buckovski, Kosovo's President Ibrahim Rugova canceled his planned meeting with him, citing a busy schedule.

The border dispute stems from a border deal signed in 2001 between Serbia-Montenegro and Macedonia to resolve some problems left over after the breakup of former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

However, a 60-mile border stretch that straddles Kosovo — which officially remains the province of Serbia-Montenegro,



A Kosovo ethnic-Albanian man walks past photos of missing persons in Kosovo's capital, Pristina, on Tuesday. Talks between officials from Kosovo and Serbia will resume to deal with the issue of missing persons from the 1998-99 war, the province's prime minister, Ramush Haradinaj, declared.

gro, but has been an international protectorate since 1999 — remains contested because of the province's unresolved status.

That agreement was recognized by the U.N. Security Council but has been brought into question by the Kosovo's leadership, which argues that Belgrade

has no authority over the province and cannot decide on changes made to its borders.

Ethnic Albanians farmers also say the Skopje-Belgrade deal defined 6,175 acres of their private land as being part of Macedonia, further fueling tensions.

Queen hosts music reception

LONDON — Queen Elizabeth II met four of Britain's most famous guitarists Tuesday, asking them, "And what do you do?" Queen's Brian May, Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin, Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck were all guests at a Buckingham Palace party to honor the British music industry.

"It's great to meet her and it doesn't matter at all that she did not know who we were or what we do," Clapton said. "I wouldn't expect her to."

Other guests included Charlotte Church, Cilla Black, Shirley Bassey, Roger Daltrey and Geri Halliwell.

Holocaust denier Zundel charged

FRANKFURT, Germany — A German judge ordered white supremacist Ernst Zundel held in jail after arraignment him Wednesday on charges of denying the Holocaust and inciting hatred.

Zundel, who was deported from Canada on Tuesday, made no statement at the closed arraignment in the southwestern city of Mannheim, court spokesman Ulrich Kriebel said. German prosecutors accuse Zundel of decades of anti-Semitic activities, including repeated denials of the Holocaust — a crime in Germany.

Prosecutors obtained an arrest warrant for him in 2003. Because Zundel's Holocaust-denying Web site is available in Germany, he is considered to be spreading his message to Germans.

Canadian authorities deported Zundel, 65, after a federal judge ruled that his activities were a threat to national and international security.

Zundel has operated Samizdat Publishing, a leading distributor of Nazi propaganda, since the 1970s. Over the past decade, he has been a key content provider for a Web site dedicated to Holocaust denial.

Zundel has claimed he is a peaceful man with no criminal record against him in Canada.

Major quake strikes Indonesia

TOKYO — A powerful earthquake struck eastern Indonesia late Wednesday, meteorological agencies said, and was felt as far off as Australia. There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries.

The 7.2 magnitude quake, which did not trigger a tsunami, struck at 1042 GMT and was centered about 200 miles southeast of Ambon in the Banda Sea, Japan's Meteorological Agency said.

Officials at Indonesia's Meteorology and Geophysics Agency said there were no immediate reports of damage or injuries, perhaps because of the quake's depth — 117 miles under the seabed — and distance from the mainland.

It was not immediately clear if residents in Ambon, the capital of Maluku province, felt the quake. But residents in Australia's northern city of Darwin said they could feel their houses shaking.

Japan's Meteorological Agency said last month it would start issuing bulletins on earthquakes powerful enough to trigger tsunamis — meaning those measuring magnitude 7 and above — even when they occur far from Japan.

Cigarette sales fall in Ireland

DUBLIN, Ireland — Ireland's ban on workplace smoking has led to a significant drop in the sale of cigarettes, the biggest tobacco company in the market said Wednesday.

Gallagher Group PLC said the entire market in the Republic of Ireland for legal cigarette sales fell 11.3 percent last year to 8.9 billion cigarettes from 10 billion in 2003.

The British-based company, which produces several leading brands including Silk Cut and Benson & Hedges, released the drop in its full-year 2004 results.

Gallagher said its share of the Irish Republic's market fell to 49.1 percent of all cigarettes sold, compared to 49.5 percent in 2003.

Last March, Ireland became the first nation in the world to ban smoking from all enclosed workplaces. The measure was inspired by similar restrictions already in place in dozens of U.S. cities and states.

From The Associated Press

Madrid suspect had N.Y. station sketch

BY DANIEL WOOLLS
The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — A suspect in the Madrid train bombings was found to possess a sketch and technical details about Grand Central Terminal in New York, a report said Wednesday.

The sketch and data were on a computer disk seized about two weeks after the March 11 train bombings in Madrid that killed 191 people last year, the newspaper El Mundo said.

Spanish police turned the disk over to the U.S. agents from the FBI and CIA in December once they understood the scope of the technical data, the report said.

A U.S. Embassy official confirmed that American law en-

forcement authorities received information related to Grand Central Terminal from Spanish authorities in December. The official declined to go into detail.

However, a Spanish police official said Spanish and U.S. authorities thought "not lend much credibility to the sketch, saying it is not even clear it is a picture of Grand Central Terminal."

The police official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, confirmed that the sketch was found in the home of Mohamed Atta, an Egyptian who was arrested in Madrid on March 24 but later released, although he is still considered a suspect.

Atallah was questioned over his alleged ties to two suspects jailed in connection with the attack after witnesses placed them aboard trains targeted in the string of 10 bombs, El Mundo said.

Cancun cops charged with helping drug traffickers

BY MARK STEVENSON
The Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Prosecutors said the cops are charging 10 police officers, including local, state and federal police in Cancun — for running a drug ring or aiding in the murder of fellow officers.

The charges are the result of authorities' efforts to bust one of Mexico's largest police-protection rackets and come after three federal agents were killed in November.

The three were apparently gunned down by the Zetas after the cops' colleagues fingered them. The Zetas are a feared gang of drug hit men led by deserters from an elite Mexican army unit.

The prime suspects in police corruption became even darker Tuesday when prosecutors explained why the three were killed: The drug hit men were looking for

money and cocaine police allegedly stole when they staged an illegal November raid on a Cancun house.

So ugly were the revelations that Mexico's top anti-drug prosecutor, Jose Luis

“*[They] have dirtied us, and dirtied the good name of Mexicans.*”

Jose Luis Santiago Vasconcelos
anti-drug prosecutor

Santiago Vasconcelos, said those arrested "have dirtied us, and dirtied the good name of Mexicans."

Prosecutors have arrested 25 police officers and two civilians, and were searching for 13 more suspects.

The charges illustrate how traffickers

continued to infiltrate the area around the Caribbean resort despite a crack-down following the 2001 arrest of the state's former governor on drug charges.

Eight of the suspects were charged with homicide or being accessories to homicide. Officials said they identified and gave drug gunmen information about the three federal agents whose bodies were found on the outskirts of Cancun on Nov. 25, along with two civilians believed to be informants.

A total of 25 suspects — including some of those charged with homicide — were facing organized crime and drug trafficking charges. They included federal police agents and state police officials assigned to the Cancun area, and municipal police employed directly by the Cancun city government.

The charges extended to the highest levels of the local police structure, including the Mexican equivalent of the FBI.

Austria faces 'The Sound of Music'

BY GEORGE JAHN
The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — The Nazis are back in Vienna — at least on stage. But this time there's no doubt that they're the bad guys.

The latest look at the country's relationship to Hitler is through the melodic looking glass of "The Sound of Music" — the first full staging in Austria of a musical beloved the world over but virtually unknown in the nation it depicts.

After years of denial, official Austria has turned in the past two decades from depicting itself as a victim of Adolf Hitler, who was born in Austria, to acknowledging its key role in the Holocaust.

But some Austrians remain sensitive to the country's Nazi past, and Saturday's premiere — in German, with actors dressed as Nazi storm troopers standing guard in the audience, a theater box filled with mock Nazi dignitaries, and a huge swastika banner

draped onstage — dredged up painful memories for some.

"It's too much, too much," said one elderly woman who refused to give her name as she waited at the coat check Saturday night.

"I was 12 the last time I saw such things in any theater."

The melodic adventures of Baron von Trapp, his children and Maria, the governess who becomes von Trapp's wife and mother to the Austrian family before they flee the Nazis, are familiar to

untold millions the world over, made famous by the 1965 film version that won five Academy Awards, including Best Picture.

Last year, a poll showed that more than a third of Austrians believe the Nazi era was in some ways positive.

On Saturday, Vranitzky called the Volksoper staging of the Nazi-era musical "a courageous attempt ... both musically and historically."

The bravos and applause Saturday reflected general approval.



Michael Kraus, left, Sandra Pires, second left, and child actors perform as the von Trapp family during a rehearsal for the musical "The Sound of Music," in Vienna.

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Mel Gibson buys island

SUVA, Fiji — Hollywood star Mel Gibson has purchased a Pacific island hideaway in northern Fiji, but the sale faces a legal challenge from villagers who claim their ancestors were forced off the island, an official and news reports said Wednesday.

The director of "The Passion of the Christ" and star of the "Mad Max" films purchased the 5,411-acre Mago Island from Japan's Tokyu Corp. for about \$15 million.

The Fiji government's Cabinet approved the sale last month, principal lands officer Laiza Raratabu said Wednesday.

Any legal challenge against the sale is likely to be difficult now that Gibson is the legal owner, but a landless tribe of indigenous Fijians say their ancestors were forced from the island in the 19th century and that they want it back.

Nefertiti bust on display

BERLIN — A 3,300-year-old bust of the Egyptian queen Nefertiti went on display Tuesday at a new, temporary home in Berlin as the centerpiece of a special five-month exhibition.

The 19-inch high bust, with elegantly arched brows and towering dark-blue headdress, was discovered by German archeologists in 1912. It will be featured in an exhibit on art and hieroglyphs through Aug. 2.



Bust of Nefertiti

NATO's frozen exercise

OSLO, Norway — The Cold War took on a whole new meaning Tuesday for NATO and other troops practicing winter warfare techniques in snow-swept parts of Norway.

Belgian F-16 fighters were like "Bambi on ice" at an airport and a Norwegian military helicopter had to rescue two freezing French soldiers from a mountain-side, the Norwegian military said.

The 15-nation Battle Griffin exercise began in earnest on Tuesday, with 14,000 troops in cold weather training.

And the Norwegian winter provided plenty of ice, snow and temperatures down to -4 F.

From The Associated Press

Running alone

VT RUTLAND — Mayor John Cassarino is running for re-election, but it's not much of a race. For the second time in his six years as mayor, he has no opponent.

It's a reprieve enjoyed only once by his predecessor, former mayor Jeffrey Wennberg, who fought off challenges five of the six times he ran for office. In comparison, Cassarino has been unopposed during two out of his four campaigns for office.

The mayor said he's grateful for another stress-free re-election, adding that he plans to continue moving the city forward in the manner that has been politically successful for him so far.

Bullfighter injured

TX LA GLORIA — Bullfighter David Renk suffered seven broken ribs and a collapsed lung when he was pinned by a bull at the blessed bullfight at the Santa Maria Bullring.

Renk was injured when the 1,000-pound bull pinned him to the ground. Fred Renk said his son's condition was improved, he remained in the Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen.

"He got hit hard. The head was on top of him, just kept grinding in the ring," Renk said in a story (The McAllen) Monitor. "Everybody was out there with a cape trying to take him [the bull] away, but he refused to leave David."

Grandma's drug charges

WV DANVILLE — A 78-year-old woman faces drug charges and authorities are searching for her 72-year-old boyfriend after police found more than a pound of marijuana stashed in a freezer on her property.

State police arrested Mollie Williams after responding to a dispute between her granddaughter and the granddaughter's husband, who were arguing over drugs. Police learned the man allegedly had bought marijuana from Williams, State Police Cpl. Larry O'Bryan said.

Armed with a search warrant and a drug-sniffing dog, troopers went to Williams' residence near Danville. The dog led troopers to a freezer in an outbuilding where the marijuana, worth an estimated \$4,000, was hidden under frozen meat and other food, O'Bryan said.

Williams was jailed and later released on \$15,000 bond.

Steamed over smoking

RI PROVIDENCE — Bars, restaurants and businesses are now smoke-free, making Rhode Island the seventh state in the nation to ban puffing in virtually all indoor public places. The other six are California, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts and New York.

The smoking ban went into effect even as some lawmakers and bar owners were mobilizing to revise it or challenge it in the courts.

The law covers thousands of bars and restaurants, and all indoor workplaces. But it extends the deadline to Oct. 1, 2006, for bars with liquor licenses that don't serve food and groups formed as private social organizations, such



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

as the Veterans of Foreign Wars or Knights of Columbus.

Museum has story to tell

SC CHARLESTON — Charleston's Old Slave Mart, where thousands of blacks were sold during the waning days of slavery, will open as a city museum next year, telling the story of the domestic slave trade.

The Old Slave Mart, a tiny, two-story building in the city's historic district, was used to auction slaves between 1856 and 1863.

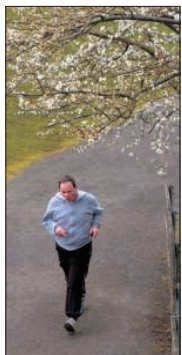
As the Civil War approached and public distaste for slave trading grew, the city of Charleston banned sales of slaves in public. That's when the slave mart, with its private courtyard off the street, opened. It did a brisk business.

Nichole Green, the museum's curator, has created a database of stories and catalogued about 150 artifacts from the era.

"We want people to carry these stories with them out of the building," said Green, who is studying at Duke University for her Ph.D. in anthropology.

Not resting in peace

WI SHEBOYGAN — A woman accused of digging up and taking her boyfriend's cremated remains more than a decade ago — and drinking the beer that was bur-



A fruitful run

In between rain showers, Dan Cadigan of Longview, Wash., runs a Lake Sacajawea trail in Longview that has been brightened by a blooming cherry tree.

ied with them — was sentenced to 60 days in jail.

Karen Stolzmann, 44, had faced up to nine months in jail on a misdemeanor charge of concealing stolen property.

Investigators accused Stolzmann of digging up the ashes of her former boyfriend, Michael Hendrickson, at a Columbia County cemetery possibly out of spite for his family.

Hendrickson was 27 when he died in 1992 from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. His relatives contacted authorities last fall after discovering his remains were stolen.

Beer and cigarettes buried with him also were missing.

Investigators were led to Stolzmann, who had lived with Hendrickson and was with him when he shot himself. Both were married to other people at the time.

Hunting for protection

NE LINCOLN — What do Bigfoot, Noah's Ark and Amelia Earhart's plane have in common? They're all being used to make a point by Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers, who is taking aim at a measure to protect hunting.

In an attempt to mock the proposed change to Nebraska's constitution, Chambers has filed 35 amendments to protect the hunting of a myriad of other things, including the missing Earhart plane, the ark, Osama bin Laden and the Holy Grail.

"This state is not going to ban fishing, hunting and trapping," said Chambers, who believes the proposal is unnecessary.

While there is no immediate threat, there are animal rights groups that would like to see hunting, fishing and trapping outlawed, said Sen. Ed Schrock, who introduced the measure. "I think we should probably get out ahead of this."

The proposed amendment would add one paragraph to the state constitution that says fishing, trapping, and hunting are a "valued part of the heritage of the people and will be a right forever preserved."

A honky-tonk school

TX PASADENA — A quarter-century after Gilley's Club became the world's most famous honky-tonk, local school officials plan to turn the site into a middle school.

The Pasadena Independent School District bought the nearly 15-acre site where the club — that with its mechanical bull ride became an international tourist draw after it was featured in the 1980 movie "Urban Cowboy" — once stood in this Houston suburb.

The Pasadena school district agreed to pay nearly \$440,000 in back taxes to purchase the property.

Seattle fault worries

WA BELLEVUE — A study by the state Division of Emergency Management concluded that a 6.8 magnitude quake along the Seattle fault would kill 1,660 people, injure 24,200, collapse buildings and bridges and cause \$33 billion in damage.

The 30-mile-long fault runs through the city and suburbs east of Lake Washington.



Taking the dry route A walkway in uptown Charlotte, N.C., has plenty of foot traffic as people avoided the cold rains that fell in the metro area by using the skyway on their way to work.



Arlington visitors

Cemetery in Arlington, Va.

Canada geese walk in the snow among the headstones at Arlington National



Never too old

Reinaldo Diaz, 21, center left, and Nick Pickett, 24, center right, help area children build a snowman at Fallon Park Elementary School in Roanoke, Va.



A golden surprise

Ruth Zerr stands on the porch of her home in El Paso, Texas, to look over Mexican gold poppies that have sprung up in her rock-landscaped front yard. Zerr said the poppies have grown at her home during the spring each of the past three years. The poppies grow in a desert area along a road about a mile from Zerr's home. Zerr said she believes the wind blew seeds into her yard where they took root in the dirt below the rocks.



Challenging work

Jen Salmans of Mount Carmel College of Nursing in Columbus, Ohio, hammers in a nail on a Habitat for Humanity home in Boynton Beach, Fla.

Salmans was taking part in Habitat's Collegiate Challenge for students on spring break. Each student paid \$100 to be part of the challenge.



Mother's little helper

J.T. McCordle, 4, helps fold the family laundry at G & G Laundry in Owensboro, Ky.

60 free on pilot program

OK OKLAHOMA CITY — Sixty inmates will be released from the Oklahoma County jail to participate in a program for nonviolent mentally ill people.

Those who succeed in the four-month program could be sentenced to probation or other forms of punishment including mental health care or drug court.

Molar Express rolls in

NH LITTLETON — A mobile dentist's office hits the North Country's roads next month to provide care for people who can't afford customary dental visits.

The Molar Express is supported by the North Country Health Consortium and is aimed at providing basic dentistry services, initially to children, in northern Coos and Grafton counties.

"What we're doing is really taking care of the children who are on the Healthy Kids program," said Anne Corridan of Molar Express.

Healthy Kids is the state Medicaid program for children.

About nine percent of children in the North Country are eligible for Healthy Kids, versus 18 percent statewide.

No jail for nacho man

TN MARYVILLE — A man caught by police last summer on his 32nd birthday running naked and covered in nacho cheese has pleaded guilty to burglary, public intoxication and other charges.

But he won't be going to jail. In a plea deal with prosecutors, Michael David Monn was sentenced to three years in prison but was given supervised probation.

Prosecutors said Monn was drunk when he broke into a swimming pool snack bar in July 2004.

A police officer found Monn in the facility's parking lot after Monn had apparently scaled an 8-foot-tall fence and was seen running toward a Jeep with a box of stolen snacks and a container of nacho cheese.

In his Jeep, Maryville officers found clothing and an open bottle of vodka.

Delivering the cash

NY ALBANY — Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., told the state's mayors he's confident lawmakers and the Bush administration will agree on a federal highway spending bill of roughly \$300 billion. Schumer said the deal would fund a number of road projects across upstate New York.

Midwives investigated

FL BRADENTON — Authorities are investigating two women for allegedly acting as midwives without a license after Mara McGlade, 25, died of extensive bleeding and other delivery difficulties last December. McGlade was hospitalized after giving birth to a boy at home and died two days later.

No race for attorney

IA DES MOINES — Des Moines attorney Doug Gross said he won't seek the Republican nomination for governor in 2006. Gross, who ran unsuccessfully

against Gov. Tom Vilsack in 2002, says he's confident he could win the nomination but the strain would be too great for his family.

17-year term for slavery

MD GREENBELT — A Maryland woman was sentenced to no more than 17 years in prison for forcing a Cameroonian girl to work as a domestic servant for no pay, beginning when the girl was 11.

Theresa Mubang, herself originally from Cameroon, was convicted by a federal jury in November of involuntary servitude and harboring an alien. Prosecutors said she forced the girl to cook, clean and take care of Mubang's young children from November 1996 until November 1998. She also beat the girl, they alleged.

Mubang fled shortly after her conviction and was not in court for the sentencing. Her attorney, Peter Goldman, said Mubang's use of a domestic servant was part of the "cultural norm" she brought from Cameroon, in west Africa.

Sealing up old mines

NM LORDSBURG — A Utah firm or consequences company was awarded a \$173,000 contract to seal the openings to 35 abandoned mines near Lordsburg this year. St. Cloud Mining Co. will backfill most of the openings. Some will be blocked off by gates, allowing access by bats and owls.

Cashing in on trash

PA PEN ARGYL — Garbage pickup is now free in this Northampton County borough. However, officials are still publishing the names and addresses of residents with outstanding garbage bills. The uncollected bills range from \$1.30 to nearly \$2,500 by the owner of some apartments.

Beneficial rains

AZ PHOENIX — Ravaged by wildfires in recent years, the Southwest could see a quieter fire season in 2005 because of rain storms that have drenched the region this winter, according to a government forecast.

The report predicted significant fire activity will not start until May because trees, shrubs and grass are wetter than normal.

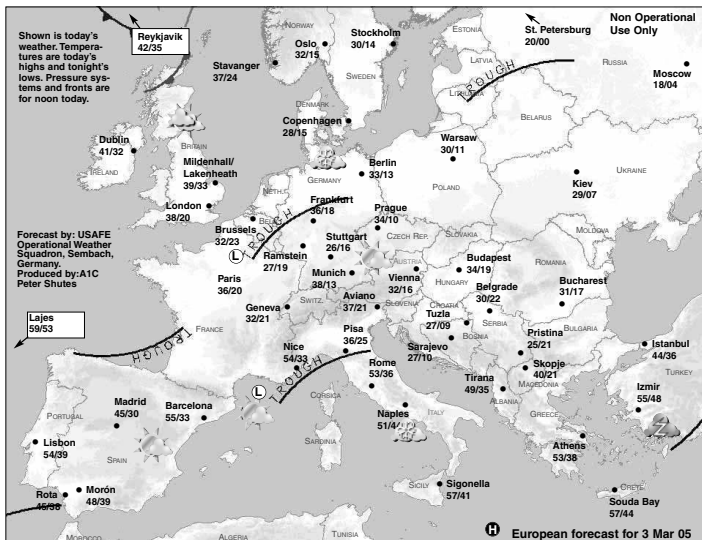
In a region haunted by an almost decade-long drought, some fire seasons have started as early as February and lasted as late as October. The normal fire season runs from May to mid-July.

The added moisture is good for the mountainous high country, but bad for the desert. That is because the longer the moisture lingers in desert areas, the taller and thicker vegetation will grow — providing more fuel for brush fires later in the year.

Show them the money

TN CHATTANOOGA — A group advocating adoption of a state income tax challenged Gov. Phil Bredesen to reveal his funding sources for major initiatives, including higher education, a preschool program and more aid to local governments. Tennesseans for Fair Taxation said their proposal would lower taxes for most residents.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



KEY: Sunny, Partly cloudy, Mostly cloudy, Cloudy, Showers, Tornadoes, Rain, Rain/snow, Snow, Cold front, Warm front, Trough, Occluded, Stationary, Low High

AFRICA

Capetown	78	63	Mogadishu	91	74
Dakar	78	64	Nairobi	75	73
Freeport	89	71	Rabat	69	54
Kinshasa	89	72	Tripoli	66	50

THE WORLD

Amsterdam	32	11	Manila	90	71
Bahrein	79	58	Mexico City	71	52
Beijing	40	19	Montreal	24	04
Bombay	36	15	Riyadh	84	74
Buenos Aires	66	55	Rio de Jan	80	64
Buenos Aires	66	55	Rio de Jan	80	64
Calcutta	81	62	Sao Paulo	78	58
Chennai	81	62	Sao Paulo	78	58
Hong Kong	84	63	Sydney	78	73
London	54	39	Tokyo	49	38

TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

Alaska	78	63	Cleveland	25	18
Alaska	78	63	Columbia	30	23
Alaska	78	63	Columbia	30	23
Alaska	78	63	Columbia	30	23
Alaska	78	63	Columbia	30	23
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Alaska	78	63	Columbia	30	23
Alaska	78	63	Columbia	30	23
Alaska	78	63	Columbia	30	23

Hamburg	33	20	Nashville	50	34
Hartford	33	20	New York	62	47
Houston	59	29	New York	62	47
Houston	59	29	New York	62	47
Houston	59	29	New York	62	47
Houston	59	29	New York	62	47
Houston	59	29	New York	62	47
Houston	59	29	New York	62	47
Houston	59	29	New York	62	47
Houston	59	29	New York	62	47

San Diego	66	47	San Francisco	72	52
San Diego	66	47	San Francisco	72	52
San Diego	66	47	San Francisco	72	52
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San Diego	66	47	San Francisco	72	52
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San Diego	66	47	San Francisco	72	52

San Francisco	72	52	Seattle	52	34
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San Francisco	72	52	Seattle	52	34
San Francisco	72	52	Seattle	52	34
San Francisco	72	52	Seattle	52	34
San Francisco	72	52	Seattle	52	34

EUROPEAN FORECAST

Beneles: Cloudy with snow showers. Highs in the 30s. Friday lows in the low teens to low 20s.

Britain, Ireland: Mostly cloudy. Highs in the upper 30s to low 40s. Friday lows in the lower 20s to the lower 30s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Mostly cloudy. Highs in the 20s. Friday lows in the upper single digits to lower teens.

France: Mostly cloudy with rain and snow showers. Highs in the north in the 30s. Highs in the south in the mid-50s. Friday lows in the lower 20s to lower 30s.

Northern Germany: Mostly cloudy with snow showers to the far north. Highs in the lower to upper 30s. Friday lows in the teens.

Southern Germany: Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 20s to the upper 30s. Friday lows in the teens.

Hungary: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid-30s. Friday lows in the teens.

Northern Italy: Mostly cloudy with isolated snow showers. Highs in the upper 30s. Friday lows in the low to mid-20s.

Southern Italy: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid-30s. Friday lows in the upper 30s to mid-40s.

Kosovo: Mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid-30s. Friday lows in the upper teens to lower 20s.

Norway: Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Highs in the 30s. Friday lows in the mid-teens to mid-20s.

Poland: Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers in the south. Highs in the mid-40s to mid-50s. Friday lows in the 30s.

Turkey: Cloudy with isolated rain showers except isolated thunderstorms to the east. Highs in the mid 40s mid-50s in the north and west with low 70s in the south. Friday lows in the upper 30s to low 40s in the north and west with lower 50s in the south. Inland high temperatures will be in the upper 30s along with a rain/snow mix. Friday lows in the lower 30s.

MIDEAST

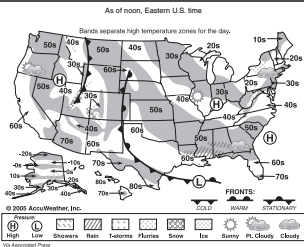
Mazhar-Sharif	70/46	Kabul	53/36	Islamabad	67/50
Ashgabat	73/44	Tehran	65/46	Zahedan	53/41
Baghdad	80/48	Kuwait City	78/59	Dubai	77/59
Manama	80/48	Doha	78/59	Karachi	78/60
Hyderabad	97/68	Bombay	90/74		

SUN & MOON

Sunrise (Baghdad)	7:05AM	Tonorrow	7:03AM
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	6:29AM	6:28AM	
Sunset (Baghdad)	6:11PM	6:13PM	
Sunset (Frankfurt)	6:02PM	6:02PM	

Last of 3 Mar 05, New moon 17 Mar 05, First of 17 Mar 05, Full moon 31 Mar 05

THE UNITED STATES TODAY



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STARS AND STRIPES

Your HomeTown Newspaper

Horoscope

The word "deserve" is subjective. Some people perform great acts of generosity every day and feel they are worthy of only crumbs from the banquet of life. Others do nothing and expect grapes to be peeled for them. Mars and Jupiter square off, encouraging us to consider our sense of entitlement. Is it balanced? Fair-minded?

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(March 3). You get serious about your No. 1 goal this year and will have what you want. You are also able to attain smaller wins along the way by sticking to your plan. Casual relationships don't stay casual. Early summer highlights a big commitment. Someone you hire makes a difference in June and July. Love with a Scorpio or Sagittarius is favored.

ARIES (March 21-April 19).

You sometimes feel that if you're not acting against an opposing force you're not working hard enough. But everything doesn't have to be a fight. Try compliance for a change. You may actually like it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20).

There's something grand and melancholy about working alone, and you'll revel in it. You'll probably burn the midnight oil tonight, too — just remember, there is a point of diminishing returns.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21).

You'll have extraordinary insights while accomplishing ordinary tasks like cleaning up, making phone calls and clearing your desk. Get out in the world this afternoon. Your luck is uncanny. You could even win a raffle or lottery.

CANCER (June 22-July 22).

No one wants to admit bad behavior, but your refreshing honesty drives you to do just that. You could find yourself defending the very thing only a fool would defend. You're in good company, though.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).

Romance permeates your environment, though it's not necessarily the

kind that involves being in love. Very grown-up behaviors are highlighted — this could include deep business, litigation or some lofty form of decadence.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

Learning to do something creative with your hands (gardening? sketching? cooking?) will keep you out of the restless prison of tedium. Also, make a firm, regular date with someone you care about.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

There's so much to get done now that you'll wish you had your own staff — unless, of course, you do have your own staff, and then, you'll wish they were one-tenth as efficient as you are.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).

Cause and effect are clearly illustrated in your life. The more forthright you are, the more successful you'll be. Don't keep anyone waiting on hold — it's bad karma. Tonight features an eternally seductive temptation.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

You need a break from rigorous self-observation. Return to childish innocence by refusing to over-think your work. Also, make more time for "bessies." Fivokous activities are lucky.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

Though you can appreciate a well-told story as heartily as the next person, today, it's the facts you're after, not imagination. Ask direct and pointed questions, and you'll learn exactly what you need to know.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).

Avoid the (juicy) rumor mill! If you can take the high road, you stand to gain while others learn their lesson. On a financial note, you'll get access to the money once you prove you can handle it.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

Diverse characters delight and inspire you. You're to be commended for being able to relate to people of all walks of life. If you follow the golden rule, everyone gets along. Your connection with a Scorpio is particularly strong.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



Peanuts



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



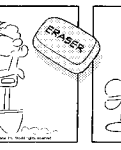
Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



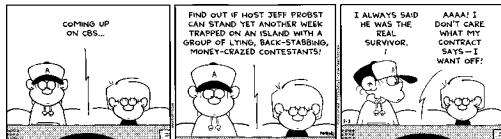
Red and Rover



Better or Worse



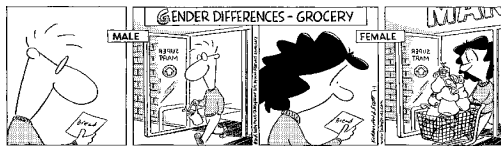
Forktot



B.C.



Baby Blues



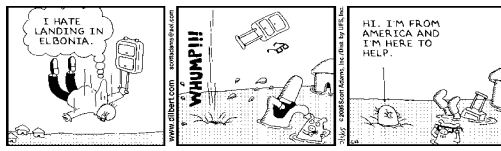
Spider Man



Blondie



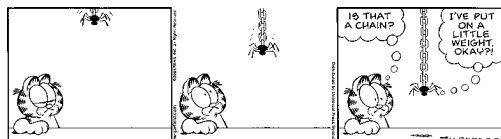
Dilbert



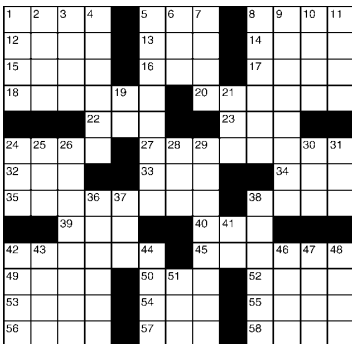
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Gift-tag word
- 5 Diastema
- 8 Detail
- 12 Mystique
- 13 Tree-ting tally
- 14 — Valley, Calif.
- 15 Crystal gazer
- 16 Outy's cohort
- 17 Writer Kingsley
- 18 — Roell (artistic illusion)
- 20 Tags
- 22 Lummock
- 23 Moment
- 24 Huck's craft
- 27 New Zealand port
- 32 — king
- 33 IRS employee
- 34 Shaft of light
- 35 Ascots et al.
- 38 Advantage
- 39 Prior to
- 40 Announcer
- 42 Will subject
- 45 Zorba's place
- 49 Lose weight
- 50 Mound start
- 52 Streamlet
- 53 A handful
- 54 Flee the fuzz
- 55 Five carats
- 56 Basin accessory
- 57 The lady
- 58 Longings

Down

- 1 Observe Ramadan
- 2 Confrite one
- 3 Hydrox rival
- 4 Woodchuck's kin
- 5 Competitor's countenance
- 6 Past
- 7 Rid of rind
- 8 Sherman's "Jeffersons" co-star
- 9 Hours-worked record
- 10 Olympic runner
- 11 Not even come close
- 19 Ma's mate
- 21 Send out invitations
- 24 Took off
- 25 Brewery product
- 26 Camera hogs rack it up
- 28 "— Lazy River"
- 29 Gin, for one
- 30 Kvetch
- 31 Turn red?
- 36 "Seinfeld" role
- 37 Drenched
- 38 Pep
- 41 On the other hand
- 42 Being, to Brutus
- 43 Lento
- 44 Grow-up elvers
- 46 Green acres
- 47 Family
- 48 "Desire Under the —"
- 51 "Sis boom bahl!"

Answer to Previous Puzzle



3-3

CRYPTOQUIP

Y ICCF PRIWF IQV KYVKWH
CFCGMPZOH. RC PFF NZQR
OMC GQQV KVCPOWVCH

RQVN IQV GCPZWOH.
Yesterday's Cryptquip: IRISH SONG
CONCERNING A FELLOW WHO ALWAYS SMILES
WARMLY: "THE WEARING OF THE GRIN."
Today's Cryptquip Clue: C equals E

NBA scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division			
W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	39	18	
Philadelphia	29	28	1 1/2
New York	27	30	2 1/2
Toronto	24	32	4 1/2
New York	23	42	5

Southeast Division			
W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	31	24	
Washington	31	24	7 1/2
Charlotte	12	42	22 1/2
Atlanta	26	19	31

Central Division			
W	L	Pct	GB
Denver	31	24	
Cleveland	28	28	5 1/2
Indiana	28	28	5 1/2
Milwaukee	23	32	11 1/2

Western Conference

Southwest Division			
W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	43	10	
Dallas	38	17	4 1/2
Houston	33	22	10 1/2
Memphis	32	23	11 1/2
New Orleans	18	45	32

Northwest Division			
W	L	Pct	GB
Seattle	38	10	
Denver	29	20	4 1/2
Minnesota	28	21	5 1/2
Portland	22	33	12 1/2
Utah	27	33	20 1/2

Pacific Division			
W	L	Pct	GB
Phoenix	43	14	
Sacramento	39	17	7 1/2
L.A. Lakers	37	20	10 1/2
S.L. Warriors	32	25	15 1/2
Golden State	20	40	28 1/2

Tuesday's games			
Memphis 99, Golden State 97			
Seattle 101, Indiana 93			
Charlotte 94, Sacramento 87			
Philadelphia 118, Milwaukee 111			
Houston 119, Chicago 89			
Denver 97, Atlanta 93			
Detroit 101, Portland 93			

Wednesday's games			
Houston at Washington			
Seattle at Cleveland			
Sacramento at Orlando			
New Jersey at Philadelphia			
L.A. Lakers at Boston			
Golden State at Minnesota			
Toronto at San Antonio			
Atlanta at Utah			
Charlotte at New Orleans			
Dallas at L.A. Clippers			

Thursday's games			
Miami at New Jersey			
Atlanta at Denver			
Detroit at Phoenix			

Friday's games			
New York at Orlando			
Golden State at Washington			
Cleveland at Philadelphia			
Charlotte at Boston			
Toronto at Memphis			
Utah at New Orleans			
Sacramento at Miami			
Milwaukee at Minnesota			
Chicago at San Antonio			
Indiana at Portland			
Detroit at Seattle			
Dallas at L.A. Lakers			

Tuesday

Golden State at Washington
Cleveland at Philadelphia
Charlotte at Boston
Toronto at Memphis
Utah at New Orleans
Sacramento at Miami
Milwaukee at Minnesota
Chicago at San Antonio

Indiana at Portland
Detroit at Seattle
Dallas at L.A. Lakers

Golden State			
27	27	25	22-37
27	27	25	13-39

Three-Point Goals			
Golden State	10-24	10-24	10-24
Charlotte	5-6	Dumay 2-4	Davis 2-6
etrus 1-2	Cabarkapa 0-1	White 0-1	Murphy 1-2
Fisher 2-3	Memphis 3-20	Miller 2-4	Cardinal 3-6
Posey 1-1	Battier 1-2	Williams 1-4	Wells 0-1
Wells 0-1	Wells 0-1	Wells 0-1	Wells 0-1

Rebounds			
Golden State	44	44	44
Charlotte	30	30	30
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Fouls			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Technical Fouls			
Golden State	0	0	0
Charlotte	0	0	0
etrus 0	0	0	0
etrus 0	0	0	0
etrus 0	0	0	0

Shots			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Three-Point Goals			
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Fisher 2-3	Memphis 3-20	Miller 2-4	Cardinal 3-6
Posey 1-1	Battier 1-2	Williams 1-4	Wells 0-1
Wells 0-1	Wells 0-1	Wells 0-1	Wells 0-1

Rebounds			
Golden State	44	44	44
Charlotte	30	30	30
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Fouls			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Technical Fouls			
Golden State	0	0	0
Charlotte	0	0	0
etrus 0	0	0	0
etrus 0	0	0	0
etrus 0	0	0	0

Shots			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
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etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
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etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

Points			
Golden State	20	20	20
Charlotte	20	20	20
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10
etrus 10	10	10	10

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Payton Davis waived by new teams, could return to former clubs

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Gary Payton would finish out the season with a playoff contract. The Atlanta Hawks don't fall into that category.

The Hawks waived Payton on Tuesday, the deadline for teams to clear waivers and be eligible for a playoff roster.

Atlanta, which has the NBA's worst record (10-46), acquired Payton last week at the trade deadline in a deal that sent leading scorer and rebounder Antoine Walker to the Boston Celtics.

But Payton never reported to the Hawks and sought a buyout of his contract by Tuesday, which he got.

"Everything's fine," Hawks General Manager Billy Knight said. "It's good for Gary, it's good for us. We want our young players to be playing time, and he wants to be a free agent and make the playoffs."

The Hawks never made a push to bring in Payton, and asked whether he ever really expected Payton to show, Knight said, "I wouldn't comment about that part of it. I knew I'd talk to his agent."

The 36-year-old guard returned came to Boston last summer from the Lakers. He was averaging 12.1 points and 6.1 assists this season for the Celtics, who are interested in bringing him back.

Boston coach Doc Rivers said Boston is one of six or seven teams interested in the nine-time All-Star.

The Celtics were sparing no efforts to bring him back. Paul Pierce and Ricky Davis called Payton, as did Rivers. The coach said Payton would be happy to return to Boston, though he was keeping his options open.

"I would love to have him back," Rivers said. "When we made the trade [to acquire Payton], no one wanted him. Now six or seven teams want him. So that means he did his job very well here. I think he's made himself very attractive with what he's done here."

Hornets waive Davis, Robinson

NEW ORLEANS — The New Orleans Hornets waived center Darius Miles and forward Glenn Robinson on Tuesday, just days after trading for the veteran player.

"Dale and Glenn have been quality players in this league for many years, but we knew when we made these trades that neither of them were a part of our plans for the future," the Hornets General Manager Allan Bristow said. "By waiving them we can allow them to pursue an opportunity with another team this season."

Dale came to the Hornets along with Speedy Claxton shortly before last week's trading deadline in a deal that sent point guard



Payton

Baron Davis to Golden State. But the Hornets never expected Davis, whose contract expires after paying him \$10.1 million this season, to report to New Orleans.

The Indiana Pacers and Detroit Pistons are among teams that have expressed interest in acquiring the 35-year-old center, who has averaged 8.5 points and 8.2 rebounds during his 15-year career.

"There are some things that have to happen for the deal to be completed," Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said before Indiana's game against Seattle on Tuesday night. "I don't have the latest word on it, but we're hopeful that we can get him here."

Davis played his first nine seasons in Indiana from 1991-2000. He was traded in 2000 to the Portland Trail Blazers for All-Star forward Jermaine O'Neal.

"If this can be done, having [Davis] in a Pacer uniform would be exciting for our fans because he was certainly a terrific player over a long period of time," Carlisle said.

Robinson was sent to the Hornets by the Philadelphia 76ers in exchange for Jamal Mashburn and Rodney Rogers on Feb. 24. But the 10-year veteran, who averaged 20.8 points in 679 games, did not appear in a game for the 76ers this season after being placed on the injured list Nov. 1 with left ankle tendinitis.

Henderson back with Mavs

DALLAS — Alan Henderson signed with Dallas on Tuesday, rejoining the Mavericks less than a week after the team traded him to the Milwaukee Bucks.

Henderson was waived one day after the Feb. 24 trade that sent him and Calvin Booth to Milwaukee in exchange for Keith Van Horn.

Terms of his new deal with the Mavericks were undisclosed.

Before being traded, Henderson was the only Mavericks player to appear in every game. He started his last two games after center Erick Dampier went down with a stress fracture Feb. 17.

Henderson is averaging 3.5 points and 4.5 rebounds this season.

Shaq back at practice, says he'll play Thursday

MIAMI — Miami Heat center Shaquille O'Neal returned to practice Tuesday, one week after spraining his left knee in an awkward tumble against the Chicago Bulls.

O'Neal, who missed all but the first two minutes of that Bulls game and was held out of Miami's next three contests, said he plans to play on Thursday when the Heat visit New Jersey.

"I went through the whole practice," O'Neal said. "It was good."

Settlement likely for Bryant

BY JON SARCHÉ

The Associated Press

DENVER — Experts believe a settlement between Kobe Bryant and the woman who has accused him of rape makes the most sense for both sides because it allows them to avoid a potentially embarrassing trial that would bring out intimate details of their lives.

ABC News Radio reported Tuesday that the NBA star and his 20-year-old accuser have reached an agreement in principle, with a settlement possible as early as this week.

Attorneys for Bryant did not return calls, and the woman's attorneys declined to comment on the report.

Earlier, the woman's attorneys had scheduled a seven-hour ques-

tioning session with Bryant on Friday, but it was scratched, prompting speculation a settlement was close.

Denver attorney Bill Keating said a settlement always seemed the only logical end for the high-profile lawsuit.

Bryant and many observers "recognize this is a case likely to be very time-consuming, very expensive and a case that delves into intensely personal issues on both sides," Keating said.

"It's really the perfect case to be settled because there are lots of areas of compensation other than money that come along with getting the case settled, not having to be involved in this public issue any more," he said.

A settlement would offer Bryant "an end to litigation, an end to

courtrooms, an end to meetings with lawyers," Denver attorney Larry Pozner said. "And what you give back is money, and what Kobe Bryant has a lot of is money."

The woman filed her lawsuit in Denver federal court in August, three weeks before the criminal case against the Los Angeles Lakers star collapsed when she decided she could not participate in the trial.

Allegations in the lawsuit echoed those of the criminal case: The woman said Bryant flirted with her during a tour of the Vail-area resort where she worked in June 2003. After the two ended up in his room, they began to kiss and Bryant became more aggressive, holding her by the throat while he raped her from behind.

Tucker's follow leads Badgers

BY ARNIE STAPLETON

The Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — It wasn't so much a premonition as it was recognition of how poorly his team was shooting.

Wisconsin coach Bo Ryan had watched the Badgers go without a field goal since the 9:35 mark of the second half. So he felt confident telling forward Alando Tucker during a timeout with 10 seconds left and the game tied that he would have to beat Indiana with a putback at the buzzer off somebody's missed shot.

"Alando, you're going to get the offensive rebound on the miss that's going to win the game," Ryan told Tucker.

Sure enough, Tucker's putback at the buzzer allowed No. 23 Wisconsin to fend off Indiana 62-60 in the only game involving a ranked team Tuesday night.

"I told the guys in the locker room afterward that at least one guy listened to me one time," Ryan said. "Tucker, who scored 17 points, vowed for his coach."

"He actually did say that. He told me, 'If it is a missed shot, I want you to attack the glass hard,'" Tucker recounted. "So, I guess it played out like he wanted it."

After the timeout, Tucker was short on a three-pointer, and Mike Wilkinson grabbed the rebound but was too far underneath the basket for his follow shot to come close. No matter, Tucker swooped in, grabbed the rebound and put it back up in one motion before being swarmed by his teammates after the ball fell through the net as the backboard's red light went on.

"Mike got great position to get the rebound," Tucker said. "He made a great play by getting it up into the air. He got it up in the air, and it was a spot where I was coming right up, and I grabbed the ball and laid it in."

Indiana's Roderick Wilmont, whose putback with 15 seconds tied it at 60, was kicking himself for allowing Tucker to get past him for the rebound.

"I missed it. I should have had the box-out," Wilmont said. "We missed two box-outs at the end, and it was a disaster."

The Badgers, playing for the third time in six nights, refused to use fatigue as an excuse for blowing a 10-point lead down the stretch — when they missed nine of 10 shots from the field and six of 13 from the free-throw line.

But they were thrilled not to have to go over time.

"We definitely wanted to end it, we wanted to get it over," said Tucker, whose game-winner was Wisconsin's first basket since a jumper by Shaq Chambers gave the Badgers a 53-43 lead with 9:35 remaining.

"Tucker and Wilkinson stepped up and made plays on the last possession," Hoosiers coach Mike Davis said. "I thought it was a great game. Our guys grew up again tonight. I thought we gave ourselves opportunities to win, and we came up short."



Wisconsin forward Alando Tucker (42) shoots over Indiana guard Roderick Wilmont at the end of the game. Tucker followed his shot and put back a teammate's miss to win the game at the buzzer.

Wilkinson scored 28 points to make the Badgers' senior class the winningest group in school history. He would have eclipsed his career high of 29 points had he not gone 5-for-10 from the free-throw line over the final 2:50.

He did, however, make three of four foul shots in the final minute.

Wilkinson's class has won at least 10 Big Ten games in each of its four seasons, a school first, and he's been involved in every one of the team's 87 victories since 2000-01 mark, the best four-year stretch in school history.

Wilkinson scored 19 points in the first half as the Badgers (19-7, 10-5 Big Ten) averaged a 74-61 loss to the Hoosiers (14-12, 9-6) on Jan. 19 in Bloomington. A road win would have been a big boost to Indiana's now slim chances for an at-large berth to the NCAA tournament.

"That was one we should have won," said Indiana's Bracey Wright, whose jumper with 2:23 left capped a 13-2 run that gave the Hoosiers their first lead at 56-55.

Rough start for Willis, Pettitte

Marlins' left-hander hit hard by University of Miami; Astros' southpaw struggles in intrasquad scrimmage

The Associated Press

While Dontrelle Willis got limber, the guys facing him brought the lumber — or aluminum, in this case.

The Florida Marlins' lefty was hit hard in his spring debut Tuesday, with the University of Miami zinging him with their metal bats.

Willis gave up six runs and six hits in 2 1/3 innings and the college boys won 9-7 in an exhibition at Jupiter, Fla.

"I was throwing right where I wanted to. With the talented team they had and the bats they had, they were just turning everything around. But I had a great time out there. I was glad to get out there and get a game feel," Willis said.

"They're a good team. This is no junior college. This is the notorious University of Miami," he said.

The only thing that surprised Willis was the sound of the ball hitting the bat. He was fooled by a soft liner up the middle that went for an infield single.

"It was funny because when the ball came back at me, the ping was so loud I thought it was harder than it was, so I kind of jumped back," Willis said.

Willis (10-3), ranked 11th this season, won his first game against a major-league team since March 10, 1982, when he beat Baltimore 7-6.

Marlins newcomer Carlos Delgado went 0-for-2 with a strikeout. All of Florida's starters were out of the game by the fifth inning.

Another prominent lefty got in some work, too. Andy Pettitte faced hitters for the first time since season-ending elbow surgery in August, pitching a shaky inning in Houston's intrasquad game at Kissimmee, Fla.

Pettitte threw only fastballs during his 2 1/2-pitch performance, a cautionary measure to prevent a setback in his recovery. He gave up two runs, two walks and three hits before getting an out.

Pettitte stayed in to record four outs in the inning because the Astros wanted him to get in some extra work.

"He was a little protective of his arm," Astros catcher Brad Ausmus said. "I think he got a little frustrated with himself."

"I felt like I hadn't pitched in a long time," Pettitte said. "I didn't feel real comfortable out there today."

Tim Hudson felt fine. The Atlanta newcomer completed a \$47 million, four-year contract extension with the Braves, giving up the chance to go through free agency at the end of the season.

"I knew all along this was the place I wanted to be," the former 20-game winner said.

Hudson was traded from Oakland to the Atlanta Braves in December. He went 12-6 with a 3.53 ERA in 27 starts, but spent a month on the disabled list with an injury to his left side.

Spring training games begin in earnest Wednesday, with one that should attract some attention: the Washington Nationals vs. the New York Mets.

With the curly "W" on their caps, the former Montreal Expos gave fans in Washington a home team for the first time since the Senators left town following the 1971 season.

"It's going to be a very special day, even though it's just spring training," general manager Jim Bowden said.

After saying earlier he wouldn't play a full complement of regulars, manager Frank Robinson changed his plans. Newcomers Jose Guillen and Vinny Castilla are expected to be in the lineup, along with Jose Vidro and Nick Johnson.

Tony Armas Jr. will pitch against the Mets' Tom Glavine at Space Coast Stadium in Viera, Fla., where the Nationals hold camp.

"Frank told me how he wasn't going to start his regulars for the first few days, but, boy, they're all in there tomorrow, at least for the first couple of innings," Bowden said. "And I think that's good, because it allows the fans in



Florida's Dontrelle Willis gave up six runs in 2 1/3 innings on Tuesday in a 9-7 loss to the University of Miami in Jupiter, Fla.

Washington, as well as America, to see some of our players. A lot of these players are not very well known. They will be in six months."

The Pittsburgh Pirates opened exhibition play by beating Valparaiso 12-0 in Bradenton, Fla. Josh Fogg pitched two scoreless innings and non-roster infielder Jose Leon homered and drove in three runs.

Russell Branyan, one of three veterans vying for the Milwaukee Brewers' starting third base job this spring, had a solo homer and RBI to help his side to a 4-1 intrasquad win.

Branyan played 51 games for the Brewers last season after spending the first part of the season in the minor leagues with Atlanta and Cleveland. He's hoping his power stroke will give him an edge over Wes Helms and non-roster invitee Jeff Cirillo.

Santo, vets wait to hear from Hall

The Associated Press

MESA, Ariz. — Ron Santo plans to hold off on any early Hall of Fame celebration.

Santo is hoping to hear good news Wednesday when the Hall of Fame's Committee announces its vote. The late Gil Hodges and Roger Maris also were on the ballot, along with old-time pitchers Smokey Joe Wood and Carl Mays.

In 2003, Santo threw a big party at his home near Phoenix just before the Vets' decision day. Needing 75 percent for election, the former Chicago Cubs star third baseman fell short with 56.8 percent.

"I feel the same way I did two years ago, hoping I get in," Santo said this week during a visit to the Cubs' training camp.

Joe Torre, Tony Oliva and Luis Tiant also were among the 25 players on the ballot. Recommended to include mostly Hall of Famers, the Veterans Committee did not pick anyone in 2003.

Torre hit .297 with 252 homers and 485 RBIs over a career that spanned 2,209 games. While never making a postseason appearance as a player, he has won four World Series titles and six All-Star games since 1996 as the New York Yankees' manager.

"People inform me that with the voting, it's based on my playing career," he said on Tuesday at the Yankees' camp in Tampa, Fla. "I haven't gotten in yet on my playing career. Let's admit it, if I wasn't the manager here, we wouldn't be having this conversation," he said. "[Until] they consider the managing part of it, I think I can't happen until after I'm retired. I don't expect any phone calls."

Santo played for the Cubs from 1960-73 before spending one season with the Chicago White Sox. He retired with a lifetime .277 average, 342 home runs and 1,331 RBIs.

Santo won five Gold Glove awards and was a nine-time All-Star.

At 65, he currently works as an analyst on Cubs radio broadcasts.

Cubs manager Dusty Baker, with whom Santo does a pregame show, says he has his fingers crossed. Santo received scant support from the Baseball Writers' Association of America during his years on that ballot.

"I'd like to see him make it a lot," Baker said Tuesday. "I was pulling for him to make it in the [broadcasting wing of the] Hall of Fame. He really didn't think he was going to make that one. Hopefully, he has a great chance to make this one."

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Yankees pull Johnson from first spring outing

The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Randy Johnson will miss his first scheduled spring training start with the Yankees on Thursday because of tightness in his left calf.

The problem is not considered serious, and the left-hander is expected to be ready for what would have been his second start on Tuesday.

"I'm not concerned about him ... not at all," Yankees owner George Steinbrenner said. No Joe (Torre, the manager) knows what he's doing, and Randy is a good man."

Johnson first experienced tightness in the calf last week, and the injury reoccurred during fielding drills Monday.

"This is not that big of a deal," Johnson said. "If I had to pitch today, I could have."

"It doesn't concern our trainer," Torre said. "We don't feel it's anything that's going to be serious or major. We don't want to take any chances."

Griffey sits out scrimmage
SARASOTA, Fla. — Ken Griffey



Briefs
Jr. sat out the Cincinnati Reds' intrasquad game Tuesday because he's not up to full speed in his recovery from a torn hamstring.

"We are mostly concerned with his ability to change directions and decelerate," trainer Mark Mann said. "He is running 90 to 95 percent right now. When he can go at 100 percent two or three days in a row without restful pain, he will be cleared to play."

Phillies starter Padilla expected to miss two weeks

CLEARWATER, Fla. — Phillies right-hander Vicente Padilla will be sidelined for two weeks after an MRI on Monday confirmed he has triceps tendinitis.

He missed two months of the 2004 season with the same injury. The 27-year-old is scheduled to be Philadelphia's No. 2 starter.

If Padilla isn't ready, Gavin Floyd, Philadelphia's top pitching prospect, has the inside track to replace him in the rotation.

A pay-for-play ploy that may be costly

Incentives might widen gap between stars, PGA Tour's rank and file

By DOUG FERGUSON

The Associated Press

MIAMI — The stars are aligned in Miami, and some believe it's no accident.

The Ford Championship at Doral begins on Thursday with one of the strongest fields on the PGA Tour this year. The only player missing from the top 12 in the world ranking is No. 3 Ernie Els, who has played the Dubai Desert Classic in the first weekend of March since winning at Doral in 2002.

A small part of the tournament began Monday.

Across town at Indian Creek Country Club, Ford Motor Co. had a corporate outing involving Vijay Singh (No. 1), Retief Goosen (No. 5), Sergio Garcia (No. 6) and Padraig Harrington (No. 8).

And they didn't show up out of the goodness of their heart. The Sun-Sentinel cited a tournament source as saying the fee was as high as \$150,000.

Appearance money? "It's a corporate outing early in the tournament week," said Duke Butler, vice president of tournament business affairs at the PGA Tour. "It's not unlike a number of things that have gone on for years. None of those stipulate that you must play in the tournament."

Ford did not need to invite Phil Mickelson (No. 4) to the outing, because it already has an endorsement deal with the Masters champion. Lefty played with select Ford employees on a different golf course Tuesday.

What gives the Doral field some serious pop is Tiger Woods, the top draw anywhere in the world. Woods wasn't included in the outing for obvious reasons — he is sponsored by Buick, and \$150,000 is

chump change for a guy who commands \$3 million when he goes overseas.

Still, the corporate day with four players — all of them IMG clients — has become such an issue that it will be on the agenda when tournament sponsors gather for their annual meeting later this month during the week of The Players Championship.

"Those players already told us last year they were going to play Doral," PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem said. "Perception-wise, I understand the concern. We have to deal with the perception."

In some respects, it is simply smart business, and Ford is not alone.

Ford became title sponsor at Doral about the time it signed up Mickelson to wear its logo on his shirt and make "What will Phil do next?" commercials. That all but assures Lefty will be at Doral every year, although he skipped the first year when his wife was pregnant with their third child.

That's no different than the deal between Buick and Woods.

Woods is not contractually obligated to play any of the four Buick tournaments, although he has played at least two of them each year since he became part of the Buick golf team.

And don't forget 84 Lumber.

The Pennsylvania company signed an endorsement deal with Singh and John Daly, another big draw. And speaking of appearance money, 84 Lumber attracted a stronger-than-usual field last year by offering every eligible player in its tournament six first-class seats on a charter to Ireland for the World Golf Championships.

Jim Furyk, a camp champion at Doral, did not get an invitation to the Ford outing. He

wasn't offended. And he is not worried where these "outings" might lead — at least not yet.

"It's not like it's a new thing on tour. It's just more prominent, maybe more flashy," Furyk said. "Is it good or bad? I don't know. I guess it would be bad if it reflects on the purse."

The suggestion was that tournaments might reduce their purses to pay prominent players for an outing, giving them guaranteed money.

But Furyk quickly noted that the Doral purse is \$5.5 million, up \$500,000 from last year, and that Ford has gone above and beyond to inject life into the tournament.

Still, it raises a couple of questions. If this corporate outing was simply appearance money in disguise, will this lead to competition among tournaments?

"They need to watch this," said Kym Hougham, tournament director of the Wachovia Championship. "You don't want a case where the rich gets richer."

Hougham has no worries now. Quail Hollow is good enough to hold a major, and that alone is enough to attract players to the Wachovia Championship. Players get a Mercedes for a courtesy car, and the biggest perk of all is having only two amateurs in the pro-am.

But he can relate. Hougham used to be tournament director of the John Deere Classic, held the week before the British Open.

His last year there, he had only one player among the top 50 in his tournament. He doesn't remember who it was.

"It's important for a title sponsor to feel he has a world-class field," Hougham said.

But that leads to another question. Exactly what is a strong field? Doral has



Vijay Singh, foreground, and Tiger Woods, background, will compete at Doral in Miami this week in the Ford Championship. At a nearby country club, Singh and three others in the top 10 in the world golf ranking played in a corporate outing which gave the players a \$150,000 fee for playing, according to a local newspaper.

11 of the top 12 in the world ranking, but having Woods turned a great field into a spectacular one. In fact, one could argue that Torrey Pines had a stronger field because it had Singh, Woods, Mickelson and Els, four of the biggest names on tour.

Harrington, Garcia, Stewart Cink and David Toms only offer strength in numbers.

No one gives a tournament buzz like Woods.

"Tiger is the key," Hougham said. "If everyone is being honest about this, tournament directors would be happy with eight out of the top 10. But having Tiger legitimizes the perception people have of the field."

Ford didn't pay a dime to get him.

Deluge on the West Coast more of an anomaly than the norm

By DOUG FERGUSON

The Associated Press

MIAMI — The alarms were out in full force the past two weeks in California.

First, the Nissan Open was cut short to 36 holes because of heavy rain that left bunkers unplayable. Then, the Match Play Championship began a day late when La Costa Resort was flooded, and the course was so wet all week that officials could only cut the fairways with mowers typically used on greens.

Stuart Appleby suggested moving the West Coast swing to later in the year. Tiger Woods thought the PGA Tour should consider going to Florida first, then California.

It sounded like a good idea — until last weekend's Champions Tour event in sunny Florida got so much rain that it was shortened to 36 holes and didn't finish until Monday.

This just in ... California is not the only place it rains.

Adam Scott sounded prophetic in the Sony Open in mid-January when asked why he wasn't going to play on the PGA Tour again until the week before the Match Play Championship.

"For a tour that tries to follow the sun, it seems we play under water a lot of the time," Scott said.

True, it wasn't the best of weather on the West Coast — fog delays at Torrey Pines, wind that briefly stopped one round in Phoenix, rain at Riviera and flooding at what is starting to be known as Lake La Costa.

But look at the bright side: For an outdoor sport, golf has an incredible record of getting in 72 holes. The amazing thing was not that the Nissan Open went only 36 holes, but that this stuff doesn't happen more often.

Since the Nissan Open began in 1928, it was only the second time the tournament did not go the distance.

The leader for rain-shortened events on the PGA Tour is the Southern Farm Bureau Classic, with eight tournaments lasting fewer than 72 holes because of bad weather. In second place, which should surprise no one, is the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. Five of its tournaments were rain-shortened, with one year canceled altogether.

Superintendents and PGA Tour rules officials don't get enough credit for getting courses ready for play, especially given storm systems that can park themselves over a tournament.

Greensboro has never had a rain-shortened event since it began in 1938. Tucson has completed 72 holes every year since it started in 1945. Perhaps the best record belongs to the Western Open. It has had only one tournament cut short by rain since it went to 72 holes in 1902.

So, when PGA Tour tournament director Mark Russell said during the Nissan Open, "We are getting into waters here that I can never remember us being in," it wasn't just a play on words.

Everything runs in cycles. Pebble Beach has had mostly sunny skies the past five years.



A worker at La Costa traverses a small on-course lake last week.

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Smarty Jones' Elliott detained by U.S. immigration

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Kentucky Derby winning jockey Stewart Elliott will have been arrested and detained by federal immigration officials because of a guilty plea to felony assault four years ago.

Elliott, a Canadian citizen who won the Derby and Preakness aboard Smarty Jones last year, was taken into custody Tuesday and arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents at the Philadelphia International Airport, the Department of Homeland Security said in a statement.

The 39-year-old Toronto native was being held Wednesday at the York County Prison.

Elliott's criminal history became public during Smarty Jones' bid for the Triple Crown, which fell short when he lost to Birdstone by a length in the Belmont Stakes in June. It then showed up in screenings by customs officers at the Philadelphia airport this week. Homeland Security spokesman Manny Van Pelt said.

Under federal immigration law, aliens with felony convictions are subject to removal from the United States. Van Pelt declined to comment on Elliott's immigration status specifically, but said that he "is not here illegally."

Unless Stewart agrees to leave the country, he will remain in detention until a federal immigration judge determines his status, officials said.

A lawyer for Elliott said her client was "temporarily arrested before the immigration court" Tuesday and believes the matter will be resolved Thursday.

"Mr. Elliott voluntarily appeared before the immigration court in Philadelphia on March 1 to address the 2001 incident that was made public after the Kentucky Derby," Stuart Blatt-Chariy, a lawyer representing Elliott, said Wednesday from her office in Trenton, N.J. "The current situation is merely a procedure issue and will be resolved within the next 24 hours."

Elliott pleaded guilty in June 2001 to aggravated assault stemming from a fight with a friend inside the man's Burlington County, N.J., home in 2000. He was sentenced to one year of probation and ordered to pay \$15,000 to cover the victim's medical bills, according to court records.

NHL owners, players hold separate meetings

NEW YORK — NHL players might be replaced next season. Commissioner Gary Bettman

and the league's board of governors emerged from a five-hour meeting in New York on Tuesday to find Bettman and the owners committed to having a season in the fall.

The NHL plans to invite the players' association to the negotiating table soon, but if a deal can't be worked out in time for the season to open on schedule, then, using replacement players, there would become a possibility.

"Hopefully, it's an alternative proposition that we never have to

Sports briefs

focus on because our commitment remains making a fair partnership deal with the players," Bettman said in the same hotel in which he canceled the season two weeks earlier because of the lockout.

While the owners, general managers and other executives gathered in New York, about 150 of the NHL's 700-plus players met with league leadership in Toronto.

Both meetings Tuesday served to provide updates on what happened in the failed negotiations the past 5½ months. Union leaders scheduled another meeting for Wednesday in Toronto with player agents.

NHL players boost gate in Swedish league

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Locked-out NHL stars helped the Swedish Elite League set an attendance record this season.

The league said Wednesday that 1.86 million people attended games this season, an 8.4 percent increase from the previous year.

More than 50 NHL players competed in the 12-team league, including Colorado's Peter Forsberg and Detroit's Henrik Zetterberg. The NHL canceled its season last month.

Zetterberg was the league's top scorer with 50 points in 30 games — 19 goals and 31 assists.

Woosnam chosen Ryder Cup captain for '06, Faldo for '08

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Ian Woosnam of Wales and England's Nick Faldo were picked Wednesday as Europe's next Ryder Cup captains.

Woosnam will be the team's captain next year, while Faldo will serve in that role in 2008.

The European Tour's tournament committee announced the unprecedented double appointment — reached by unanimous decision — after a closed meeting in Dubai on Tuesday on the eve of the Dubai Desert Classic.

Woosnam, who turned 47 on Wednesday, is the 1991 Masters champion and an eight-time Ryder Cup player.

"Announcing the selection of both players appears to be a compromise to avoid snubbing Faldo. The 47-year-old Englishman is the most successful British player of his generation, with victories in six majors and 11 Ryder Cup appearances."

South Carolina RB Summers dismissed from team

COLUMBIA, S.C. — South Carolina dismissed leading rusher Demetrius Summers from the team Tuesday for violating athletics department policy.

There are certain policies and rules that our student-athletes must follow and unfortunately, Demetrius chose to violate these," coach Steve Spurrier said in a statement. "That's where we are with this and we'll move on from here."

Summers ran for 1,125 yards and four touchdowns over the

past two seasons, averaging 5.3 yards per carry. The sophomore also had 23 receptions for 211 yards and two touchdown catches.

NASCAR levies fines, suspends crew chief Lohse

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Busch Series crew chief Todd Lohse was suspended Tuesday for four races.

It was the most severe of several penalties imposed by NASCAR for violations at California Speedway.

Lohse, crew chief for Shane Hmiel, was suspended and fined \$10,000 for unapproved hinged air deflector modifications on the car during inspection last weekend.

The team has appealed to the National Stock Car Racing Commission, and Lohse is allowed to participate in the Busch race in Mexico City this weekend.

Also penalized were Nextel Cup crew chiefs Tim Weiss (\$10,000), Larry Hyder (\$5,000) and Billy Ponder (\$6,000).

Other Busch Series crew chiefs penalized were Tommy Perkins (\$2,500) and John Vermillion (\$500).

Crew chiefs from the Craftsman Truck series who were penalized were Steven Ruyndland (\$2,000), Richard Gray (\$2,000) and Jeffrey Hennes (\$500).

Skier Knauss banned 18 months for doping

OBERSHOEFEN, Switzerland — Austrian skier Hans Knauss was banned for 1½ years by the sport's international federation Tuesday after testing positive for the steroid nandrolone.

The ban covers the 2006 Turin Olympics and could end the 33-year-old skier's career. Knauss has won seven World Cup races in 14 seasons and was a giant slalom silver medalist in the 2003 world championships.

Knauss' lawyer, Christian Flick, said he would appeal in an attempt to reduce the ban to a year.

Nicklaus' grandson dies after falling in hot tub

NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla. — The 18-month-old grandson of golf great Jack Nicklaus died Tuesday after falling into a hot tub where he had been playing electric golf.

Jake Walter Nicklaus was pronounced dead at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center, Palm Beach, after a sheriff's spokesman said.

The son of Steve and Krista Nicklaus had been playing in the hot tub with his 4-year-old brother and their nanny at the family's home, Miller said. The three left the pool area and went into the house, but Jake slipped away from the tub through a sliding door to the hot tub, Miller said.

The nanny quickly realized he was missing and discovered him in the water, Miller said. She performed CPR until emergency workers arrived. The boy was breathing at the time, he said.

The boy was brought to a hospital and died shortly after rescuers were called, Miller said.

Study suggests obesity rampant in NFL

A study suggested 56 percent of NFL players are obese, based on a height-to-weight ratio that doesn't consider body muscle versus fat. The NFL is saying the study is bogus because it doesn't measure muscle.

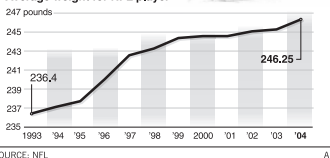
Living large

There were 339 players weighing at least 300 pounds on the NFL rosters in 2004.

Top average weight for NFL team*

PK TEAM	WEIGHT
1 Oakland	253.89
2 Baltimore	251.62
3 Seattle	250.96
4 Green Bay	250.92
5 New England	249.40
6 Dallas	248.91
7 Minnesota	248.89
8 Houston	248.64
9 Arizona	248.56
10 Detroit	247.79

Average weight for NFL player*



SOURCE: NFL

AP

Weighty: League claims it's no fatter than rest of U.S.

WEIGHTY, FROM BACK PAGE

"The high number of large players was not unexpected, given the pressures of professional athletes to increase their mass. However, it may be without health consequences," the researchers wrote, citing previous studies that documented obesity-related problems, including sleep apnea and high blood pressure in NFL players.

The study appears in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.

While the study methods were not very scientific, players' growing girth "is a major concern," said Dr. Arthur Roberts, a former NFL quarterback and retired heart surgeon whose Living Foundation works with the players' union to evaluate heart-related health risks faced by current and retired players.

"These larger body sizes are generally associated with greater cardiovascular risks," Roberts said.

The increasing emphasis on size may be a bad influence on all the young kids that play football around the country... and are trying to be like their heroes," Roberts said.

Players union spokesman Carl Francis said health and safety are "discussed all the time" and that while some players likely are obese, it's not a major problem.

NFL spokesman Greg Aiello called the study substandard and said there's no proof obesity is worse in the NFL than in U.S. society in general, where about 30 percent of adults are obese, based

on BMI data. "This was not a serious medical study," he said.

Dr. Brian Cole of Chicago's Rush University Medical Center, an orthopedic surgeon who works with the Arena Football League, also questioned the study's methods and said some teams list inaccurately high weights to appear more intimidating.

"While clearly there are pressures for increased size" in professional football, relying on published height and weight data, but not physical exams, is faulty, he said.

Julie Burns, a nutritionist who works with the Chicago Bears, said combining BMI data with players' waist measurements is a better fat indicator because some highly conditioned athletes with a high BMI also have a large amount of lean tissue.

Jurkovic said he weighed 272 pounds in the mid 1990s — he met by any standards on his 6-foot-2 frame — but was pressured by a coach to get even bigger and ballooned up to 328. On the BMI scale, that's obviously obese. Jurkovic said he had already maxed out on weightlifting so he packed on mostly fat by gorging.

Combined with the physical toll of football, excess weight wears down joints and causes problems as players age and then retire, Jurkovic said. At 37, he now weighs a "chunky" 295 and has ankle problems he blames on football and excess weight.

"It's tough for the league to police, but I think they should try to police it," he said.

On the net:

JAMA: <http://jama.ama-assn.org>
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Pats cut versatile Brown

Bucs also part with Super Bowl contributors

The Associated Press

The versatile Troy Brown might not be a part of the New England Patriots' quest for a fourth Super Bowl title in five years.

The 33-year-old Brown, a 12-year veteran who was a wide receiver, return man and defensive back for New England, was cut Tuesday as NFL teams released players to get under the \$85.5 million salary cap hours before the league's free agent period began.

Once one of the Patriots' most dependable receivers, Brown's biggest contribution in the most recent Super Bowl season was on defense. With the New England secondary weakened by injuries, Brown stepped in as an extra defensive back.

In his career, he has 475 catches for 5,516 yards and 25 touchdowns.

"As a team player, Troy is right at the top of the list," quarterback Tom Brady said in Jacksonville, Fla. "There is no other guy who has the respect of his teammates like Troy."

Brown is the third high-profile player the Patriots have released in the past week, joining linebackers Roman Phifer and four-time Pro Bowl cornerback Ty Law.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers also cut ties with two of the stars of its Super Bowl team from 2003 when they released quarterback Brad Johnson and wide receiver Joe Jurevics.

The release of the 36-year-old Jurevics had been expected.

"I have been to be told that they're fired," said Brian Griese, who started most of last year for Tampa Bay and restructured his contract to help the Bucs get under the cap. "But I think Brad is the type of guy who will use that as motivation. I know he still has some good days left and I know he wants to go and prove himself. I don't have any doubts he'll go somewhere. And wherever he goes, that team will be getting a heck of a player and heck of a leader."

Some of those players could be re-signed if they don't sign elsewhere, although Johnson is unlikely to be among them. He would join a group of veteran quarterbacks already on the market including Jeff Garcia, Vinny Testaverde and Kurt Warner.

Two other Bucs also lost to cornerback Mario Edwards and linebacker Ian Gold. So were

three members of the Raiders, the team they beat in that title game: guard Frank Middleton, safety Ray Buchanan and tight end Roland Williams.

And Green Bay cut left guard Mike Wahle, a solid starter but a player whose \$11.3 million cap number was second on the team only to Brett Favre's.

The Dallas Cowboys released three-time Pro Bowl linebacker Dexter Coakley. He would have been due a \$500,000 roster bonus if he was still on the team Wednesday.

The San Francisco 49ers terminated defensive end Brandon Whiting's contract Tuesday after he failed a physical, cutting ties with the oft-injured defensive end acquired last year in the Terrell Owens trade.

Buffalo defensive tackle Pat Williams and offensive tackle Jonas Jennings became free agents when the Bills failed to re-sign them before midnight.

The Cleveland Browns were close to finalizing a trade that would send defensive tackle Gerard Warren to the Denver Broncos for a fourth-round draft choice, a football source told The Associated Press on Tuesday night.

Skins again pounce, sign Ravens' Rabach

BY JOSEPH WHITE

The Associated Press

ASHBURN, Va. — The Washington Redskins opened free agency Wednesday by agreeing to terms for a contract with center Casey Rabach, The Associated Press has learned.

Rabach and the Redskins reached a deal at 2:30 a.m., shortly after the free agency signing period began at midnight, an official within the league told the AP on condition of anonymity. Rabach, who spent the last four seasons with the Baltimore Ravens, was driving to Redskins Park later in the morning for a physical and was expected to sign before the day was over.

The Redskins also scheduled a news conference for Wednesday afternoon to formally announce the re-signing of left tackle Chris Samuels. Samuels will receive a seven-year, \$47 million contract with a team-record \$15.75 signing bonus, according to the source.

Rabach was a third-round draft pick from Wisconsin by the Ravens in 2001 and became a starter last year. The Redskins want him to strengthen the interior of the offensive line. Lennie Friedman started last season at

center and replaced by Cory Raymer after two games.

The two edges of the line should be in solid shape with Samuels' resigning. The Redskins now have long-term deals with Samuels and right tackle Jon Jansen, who is expected to return in full health after missing last season with a ruptured Achilles' tendon.

The Redskins needed to redo Samuels' contract because he was scheduled to count a whopping \$9.5 million against the salary cap this year, restricting the team's ability to re-sign players and acquire new ones. Samuels' signing — bonus tops the club-record \$15.5 million linebacker LaVar Arrington received in a nine-year, \$68 million contract signed in December 2003.

Samuels was the No. 3 overall draft pick in 2000 from Alabama, where he won the Outland Trophy as college football's top lineman.

He made the Pro Bowl in 2001 and 2002 before a knee injury and loss of confidence caused him to slump in the 2003 season. He rebounded with a solid season last year and has been named by Joe Gibbs as one of the core group of players around which the coach hopes to rebuild the franchise.

Raiders welcome addition of Moss

BY JANIE MCCAULEY

The Associated Press

ALAMEDA, Calif. — Jerry Porter spent most of his first five NFL seasons playing behind stars Jerry Rice and Tim Brown, patiently waiting for a chance to be the Oakland Raiders' top receiver.

Now Rice and Brown are gone, but Randy Moss is bringing his incredible talents to town — and Porter is thrilled.

Just before Porter finalized his new contract with Oakland last week, his agent told him Moss might be on the way to the Raiders in a trade. Signing the deal suddenly became that much sweeter.

"We became powerful real quick. I love it," Porter said. "That was a great move to get Randy Moss."

The Raiders' acquisition of Moss in a trade with the Minnesota Vikings was expected to be announced Wednesday, when the NFL's free-agency period opened. The swap calls for Oakland to send linebacker Napoleon Harris, the No. 7 pick in April's draft and a late-round pick to the Vikings.

"Not taking anything from Napoleon Harris, but to only have to give up a draft pick and a linebacker, linebackers don't score points," Porter said.

Porter knows that having Moss on the field — making acrobatic catches, speeding past defenders and drawing downed defenses — will only open up more opportunities for him to shine. The rest of the Raiders feel the same way, envisioning a dangerous long-passing offense to rival the great Oakland teams of years past.

Late last season, quarterback Kerry Collins campaigned for the Raiders to re-sign Porter, saying it would be one of the team's most important offseason decisions, but also grabbing Moss was more than he could have hoped for.

"At this point, I put our receiving corps up against anybody's in the league," Collins said Tuesday. "Obviously, the addition



Oakland's offensive players are excited to add receiver Randy Moss (above left), expecting him to make the unit explosive. "Not taking anything from Napoleon Harris, (above right), but ... linebackers don't score points," says Raiders receiver Jerry Porter.

of Randy carries defenses more than any other in the NFL.

"I heard rumors for a couple weeks. You hear things like that all the time. You don't really know until something like that materializes. You don't think a guy like Randy Moss A. would get away from a team and B. would come to your team. I'm getting one of the best receivers in the league and a guy whose track record speaks for itself. He adds an unbelievable dimension for us from a deep-threat standpoint. He's a guy who can do it all."

Moss spent much of last season limited by a hamstring injury and didn't reach

"At this point, I put our receiving corps up against anybody's in the league."

Kerry Collins
Raiders quarterback

1,000 receiving yards for the first time in his seven-year career. He finished with 49 catches for 767 yards and 13 touchdowns.

Porter led the Raiders with 64 catches for 998 yards and nine touchdowns, falling just short of his first 1,000-yard season. His receptions were a career high, and he scored three touchdowns in a game twice.

The Raiders' second-round draft pick in 2000 out of West Virginia, Porter wanted to be showcased in new coach Norv Turner's offense during his contract year. It eventually happened.

"I can play alongside people and not have a conflict," Porter said. "I'm used to



AP photos

that. As long as Randy can do that, we'll be fine. If he can deal with not getting his 95 balls he's accustomed to getting. I want to win."

Moss' often bizarre behavior has been considered distracting over the years, but Raiders tight end Teyo Johnson isn't concerned.

"Randy Moss is one of the elements, if not the element, for us being a playoff team," Johnson said. "All I care about is winning football games, and Randy Moss can do that. You can put aside all the other things people say about him, people say he has a bad attitude. I don't care. He can play a football and make plays. The guy is the Raiders mystique."

"He can easily step into a leadership role on our squad. He can really feed off the energy Coach Turner has started here."

McCune fit for duty

NFL prospect, Army vet knows difference between football, battle

By MICHAEL MAROT
The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — When Robert McCune hears football players talk about going to war, he just shakes his head. Three years of Army service taught him that football is a game, war a battle for survival.

McCune lived on military bases in five states and was deployed to South Korea and Kuwait. He heard the crackle of nearby gunfire and camped on a roof during a monsoon. He spent days refueling military vehicles and free moments lifting a 50-pound rock.

McCune endured it all so he could keep playing football. His Army buddies found that funny.

"I told them that after this I was going to go to college and get my degree. I was going to play football, and they laughed," he said.

Now the linebacker might be close to playing in the NFL. McCune, among the 332 players invited to this year's combine, will be 26 by the time of the April draft, and he might be the oldest player selected.

"If the guy is a real good football player, you don't worry about it," Houston Texans General Manager Charley Casserly said. "If he's in the development stage, it becomes a concern."

McCune wasn't even offered a Division I-A scholarship when he graduated from LeFlore High

School in Mobile, Ala. He had hoped to play in college at Alabama or Auburn, but the only offers came from places like Alabama A&M, Alabama State, Southern University and Grambling.

So McCune joined the Army in 1997.

"My plan was to go into the military, grow up and walk on at some Division I school," he said.

During the next three years, he lived in Fort Lee, Va., Fort Stewart, Ga.; Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Knox, Ky.; and Fort Irwin, Calif. The training regimen included 4-mile runs, pushups and situps.

When he went to South Korea for one year as a patrolling specialist, McCune improvised. He used his fueling truck rig as a pulley bar and a heavy rock for weightlifting. Between missions, McCune found just enough time to pull out the sharp-edged rock for a workout.

"I'd sit on top of the truck and do curls over my head until they came," he said. "I was in Korea for 365 days, and I'd say I worked out 340 days."

McCune learned to deal with the odor of raw sewage and poor living conditions, but wasn't prepared for the monsoon season. One night, with his barracks covered in about 7 feet of water, he scrambled onto a roof and spent the night there as lightning lit the sky.

"I didn't think the rain was



Louisville LB Robert McCune (54) breaks up a pass intended for North Carolina's Adarius Bowman (11) on Sept. 25, 2004, at Kenan Stadium in Chapel Hill, N.C. McCune, who lived on military bases in five states and was deployed to South Korea and Kuwait, made a team-high 143 tackles for the Cardinals in 2003.

ever going to end," he said. "I was trying to think of a plan of what to do next."

During a six-month tour in Kuwait, McCune and the Americans rarely met the locals. Occasionally, McCune was awakened by gunfire, unsure where the shots came from.

McCune finished his active duty in 2000. When he returned home, he pursued his football dream despite a five-year commitment to the National Guard. Some coaches were wary, knowing he might miss practices.

But he persuaded John L. Smith, then coach of Louisville, to let him play as a walk-on, and he used the G.I. Bill to pay for his first semester. By the second semester, he had earned a scholarship.

In March 2003, he nearly had to leave football again. McCune's Guard unit was alerted that it might be deployed to Iraq. He

was sent to Fort Knox for training, missed part of spring football and worried he might miss part or all of his junior season.

"It was tough because I had been selected captain, and my coaches expected a lot out of me," he said. "They told me not to worry, that my spot would still be there when I got back. I missed about two or three months of school, but everything ended up working out. We weren't called up. It just made me appreciate football that much more."

McCune finished 2003 with a team-high 143 tackles, including four sacks.

This past December, after finishing his Louisville career with 320 tackles, McCune completed his military service with the rank of corporal in part of a year preparing for the NFL combine. He also earned a degree in education.

Some scouts wonder if the 6-foot, 245-pound McCune is big

enough to play inside linebacker in the NFL, but no one has questioned his commitment or work ethic.

"You assume he has a character that's very high, and that's very important to all of us," Tennessee coach Jeff Fisher said. "People who not only can avoid off-field problems, but who can be productive like that are very valuable."

McCune will spend the next two months preparing for football, watching the news and getting updates from friends never far from his mind. But you'll never hear McCune making comparisons between the game he loves and the battles he's fought.

"In war, you have real, live bullets flying around," he said.

"My buddies, they have a saying: 'Stay alert, stay alive,' and one of my friends said it's true. I tell them all the time, and they talk to me they hope I make it. I tell them 'I hope I make it, too.'"

Numbers don't tell the whole story at NFL combine

By KEVIN SHERRINGTON
The Dallas Morning News

The last time a national audience saw anything like Maurice Clarett pulling that piano at the NFL combine was in one of those old Superstars competitions, when Joe Frazier nearly drowned in the 50 free.

Clarett ran an unofficial 4.82 in the 40 the other day, then backed it up with a 4.72.

Not bad for a tackle. Unfortunately, Clarett's trying to make a living as a running back, and even a court can't help him anymore.

The combine never was a time to come up lame. As they used to say in high school, this stuff goes on your permanent record.

But now it's even more daunting. The combine is no longer the province of scouts and a few bored NFL writers on holiday.

The world's watching, and athletes have never seemed so naked.

Commentary

Clarett was so embarrassed by the overexposure that he fled the workouts.

Word is he bulked up and didn't use a personal trainer. Whatever.

You're on your own at the combine, anyway.

Your old sports information director can't cover for you anymore.

No one's fooled by media gobs or press releases.

No exaggerated heights or mythic times in Indy. Scouts poke and prod and click and click, and there's no hiding anything.

You'd have a better chance getting through a metal detector with your Swiss Army knife.

The combine is like a job interview, only instead of reading your resumé or calling up your references, they make you take the SAT and post the results.

If NFL types were running the Miss America pageant, they'd dunk Miss New Hampshire in a vat and announce her body fat.

If they were judging the Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue, they'd take off for moles.

The combine strips all romance from football. There's no glory weighing a guy in his underwear. No one can quantify your guts, only your gut.

Frankly, I'm not certain this is always the best way to go. Sure, it's nice to know that Matt Jones, the former Arkansas quarterback, runs a 4.4, which confirms suspicions that he has a shot as an NFL receiver and explains how he kept turning away from those Texas defenses.

But as fun as it is to learn a player's most intimate details, there's something disconcerting about all this attention on times and measures.

You can get carried away with the numbers. A former University of Houston defensive back

once ran a 4.4 for scouts and was drafted high even though he couldn't play and never did.

Here's how a scout named Bill Groman explained it: The kid was fast in a straight line but couldn't turn and run with a wide receiver, and they don't wait for you.

Groman knew this because he'd seen the kid play. Hard to judge football players in a vacuum. A scout stands behind a linebacker as he runs the 40 and compares it to getting sucked up by a jet on takeoff. What happens? A couple laughter years in the NFL and he's on a jet back home.

Another SWC linebacker from the same area was far less imposing. Too short and too slow, a lethal combination.

Zach Thomas just finished his ninth year in the league with the Dolphins, and the pairing is no coincidence.

"If Zach Thomas had not gone to Miami and played for Jimmy Johnson," said Spike Dykes, who coached Thomas at Texas Tech, "he never would have made it."

Translation: The only numbers that mattered to Jimmy were all the tackles Thomas racked up.

As in real estate, location is everything. Who'd argue that Tom Brady might be one of the best quarterbacks ever if the sixth-rounder hadn't ended up in New England behind Drew Bledsoe? Not that raw data is a bad thing. You can understand why clubs want to gather all the information possible.

You just can't get too much into it. Clarett was so unimpressed, the talk is he might not even be drafted. Then again, he only has to sell one team, and who knows what happens?

"We really don't know how fast he was when he was playing football," Cardinals coach Dennis Green told ESPN.com.

And make no mistake, Clarett was a player once. Whether he still is remains to be seen. He's no sprinter. Joe Frazier wasn't a swimmer, either, but it's not much consolation, looking up at him from the canvas.

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NFL's weighty debate

League dismisses study claiming more than half of players are obese

BY LINDSEY TANNER

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — It's no secret that size matters in the National Football League, but a new study suggests that a whopping 56 percent of NFL players would be considered obese by some medical standards.

The NFL called the study bogus for using players' body-mass index, a height-to-weight ratio that doesn't consider body muscle versus fat. The players union said that despite the familiar sight of bulging football jerseys, there's no proof that obesity is rampant in the league.

But former defensive tackle John Jurkovic said he's seen plenty of evidence that players have gotten not just bigger but sometimes fatter, "big as houses" in recent years because of league pressure to intimidate opponents and win.

"The NFL teams want it because it's working," said Jurkovic, who played for Green Bay, Cleveland and Jacksonville before retiring in 2000.

The theory is that bigger men, especially linemen and defensive players, are better blockers and harder to move.

But the study results suggest

that bigger players don't make a team more successful. There was no relationship between teams' average player BMI and their ranking in 2003-04, the season studied. Arizona had the highest average BMI, but also the worst record in its division.

In the study, University of North Carolina endocrinologist

Joyce Harp and student Lindsay Hecht used statistics on the NFL Web site to calculate BMIs for 2,168 NFL players, nearly all those playing in the 2003-04 season.

Almost all the players qualified as overweight, and 56 percent had BMIs of at least 30 — what doctors consider obese. For example, a 6-foot-2 man weighing 235 has a BMI of just over 30. Nearly half of the obese players were in the severely obese range, with a BMI of at least 35, and a small percentage were morbidly obese with a BMI of at least 40.

Harp acknowledged that without measuring body composition, it's uncertain how

many players were truly fat, but she said it's unlikely the high BMIs were "due to a healthy increase in muscle mass alone."



Former Oklahoma offensive guard Wes Sims runs the 40-yard dash during the NFL combine in Indianapolis on Feb. 26. It's no secret that teams court big, strong players. But are they getting too big for their own good?



Cleveland Browns defensive tackle John Jurkovic signs autographs for fans before practice at Cleveland Browns Stadium on Aug. 17, 1999. Jurkovic, who played for the Browns, Green Bay Packers and Jacksonville Jaguars, said he's seen evidence that players have gotten not just bigger but sometimes fatter.



Jockey Elliott, who won Derby, Preakness aboard Smarty Jones, detained by U.S. immigration

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